

**BEYOND FACTIONALISM? CULTURAL AND
CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS
ON PALESTINIAN SATELLITE TV**

Mohammed Omer Almoghayer

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PALESTINIAN SATELLITE TV**

**De factiestrijd voorbij? Culturele en
kinderprogramma's op de Palestijnse
satellietelevisie**

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Contents

<i>List of Tables, Figures, Images and Appendices</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>Acronyms</i>	<i>xiii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>xiv</i>
<i>Abstract</i>	<i>xv</i>
INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH	1
1.1 Problem Statement	1
1.2 Justification for the Study	5
1.3 General Background to the Study	10
1.4 Objectives and Key Questions	16
1.5 Factionalism and Defactionalisation of Media	20
1.6 Synthetic Methodologies	24
1.7 Fieldwork amidst Dissonance: practical and ethical considerations	27
1.7.1 Interviews at the PSC	32
1.7.2 Interviews at the ASC	34
1.8 Outline of Chapters	39
A SHORT HISTORY OF MEDIA IN PALESTINE: PERCEPTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES	42
2.1 Introduction	42
2.2 Background: Media under the British Mandate (1920-1948)	43
2.3 Factions without Factionalism	46
2.4 Women's Voices in the Middle East	49
2.5 Elite Competition, Factionalism and the Arab Revolt	52
2.6 Palestinian Journalism Post-Nakba (1948-67)	54
2.7 Perceptions of the Press under Israeli Occupation	57

2.8	New Perspectives on Palestinian Media since 1994	61
2.9	Palestinian TV Becomes (More) Factional	65
2.10	Conclusion	67
TOWARDS AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING FACTIONALISM AND DEFACTIONALISATION IN PALESTINIAN SATELLITE TV		70
3.1	Introduction	70
3.2	Redefining Terms: ‘Factional’ or ‘Partisan’?	71
3.3	Theorising Defactionalisation and ‘Palestinianism’	77
3.4	Comparing Different Approaches to Analysing Media Content and Production	80
	3.4.1 Theorising Media Compromises	80
	3.4.2 Theorising ‘Circuits of Media’	86
	3.4.3 Combining ‘Circuits of Media’ and ‘Factors Influencing Media Content’	94
3.5	Working with the Analytical Framework for Content Analysis	95
3.6	Conclusion	104
THE PALESTINIAN MEDIA’S WORKING ENVIRONMENT		106
4.1	Introduction	106
4.2	The Media Working Environment	107
4.3	Socio-Historical Contexts of Media Production	108
4.4	Media in Palestine: External Constraints	109
	4.4.1 Occupation: economic consequences	110
	4.4.2 Occupation: arrests and the psychology of fear	112
4.5	Media Producers in Palestine: Local Constraints and Opportunities	116
	4.5.1 Professional and ideological pressures	116
	4.5.2 Social-cultural and economic pressures	118
	4.5.3 Other political pressures	119
	4.5.4 Cultural influences	120
	4.5.5 Background: codes of conduct for the media	122
4.6	The Security Apparatuses: Realities of Occupation	124
4.7	Financial Restrictions and International Agendas	127
4.8	Beyond the Hamas-Fatah Conflict?	130

4.9	Concluding Remarks	136
CONTEXTUALISING ASC AND PSC CHILDREN'S AND CULTURAL PROGRAMMING AND PRODUCTION		138
5.1	Introduction	138
5.2	PSC: Palestinian Satellite Channel	140
	5.2.1 The PLO and the PSC	140
	5.2.2 The PSC's vision	141
	5.2.3 Programming at the PSC	142
5.3	ASC: Al Aqsa Satellite Channel	146
	5.3.1 Origins and creation of the ASC	146
	5.3.2 The ASC's vision	147
	5.3.3 Programming on the ASC	150
5.4	An Overview of Children's Programmes	152
	5.4.1 Structure of the two programmes	153
	5.4.2 Comparing context: gender, culture and religion	154
5.5	Comparing Cultural Flashes and Burning Brands	159
	5.5.1 Structure of the two cultural programmes	159
	5.4.2 The Form of Cultural Flashes, and Burning Brands	164
5.6	Concluding Remarks	169
'CIRCUITS OF MEDIA': ANALYSING THE CONTENT OF CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMES		170
6.1	Introduction	170
6.2	Themes in PSC's & ASC's Children's Programme Content	172
6.3	Thematic Content of the Children's Programmes	174
	6.3.1 Nationalism and national discourse	174
	6.3.2 Religious values	183
	6.3.3 Citizens' rights	185
	6.3.4 Resistance and resistance literature	188
	6.3.5 Social values	192
	6.3.6 Cultural values	195
	6.3.7 Political values	196
	6.3.8 Educational values	197
	6.3.9 Entertainment	200
6.4	Evidence of Defactionalisation of Content	202
6.5	Conclusions	204

ANALYSING CONTENT OF ASC'S AND PSC'S CULTURAL PROGRAMMES	206
7.1 Introduction	206
7.2 Introducing themes	206
7.2.1 Nationalism and national discourse	207
7.2.2 Religious values	212
7.2.3 Citizens' rights and obligations	213
7.2.4 Resistance and resistance literature	214
7.2.5 Social values	217
7.2.6 Cultural values	220
7.2.7 Political values	224
7.2.8 Educational values	229
7.2.9 Entertainment	230
7.3 Overall Thematic Content Analysis of Cultural Programmes	231
7.4 Overall Thematic Content Analysis: Defactionalising Media Content?	234
7.5 Comparing Decision-making and Producers' Environments across the ASC's and PSC's Programming	236
7.6 Comparing Producers' Environments across the ASC's and PSC's Cultural Programming	239
7.7 Conclusion	246
CIRCUITS OF MEDIA TO PALESTINIANISM(S)?	248
8.1 Introduction	248
8.2 Multiple or Singular? Palestinianism(s)	249
8.3 Diversified Palestinianism: Women's Voices and Gender Issues	251
8.4 Palestinianisms? Religion, Religious Minorities and Voices of Intellectuals	258
8.5 Children's Voices and Palestinianism	260
8.6 Palestinianism: The Role of 'Domestic,' Regional and International Competition	262
8.7 Towards Palestinianism: The Role of New Technologies	267
8.8 A New Sense of 'Palestinianism' in the Media?	272
8.9 Palestinianism in the presence of Israel and Western States	274
8.10 Cultural Diversity and Palestinianism	279
8.11 Factionalism Producing Palestinianism(s)	282

8.12	Conclusion	283
	CONCLUSIONS, PARADOXES, WAYS FORWARD	284
9.1	Overview of the Main Findings	284
9.2	Returning to Theory	289
9.3	Defactionalising the Factions?	292
9.4	Four Puzzles of Media in Palestine: Directions for future research	296
9.5	A Way Forward? Media Codes of Conduct	298
	<i>Appendices</i>	<i>306</i>



List of Tables, Figures, Images and Appendices

Tables

3.1	Content analysis by theme (all 88 episodes)	102
6.1	Themes in <i>Pioneers of Tomorrow</i> in order of frequency (23 episodes)	
6.2	Themes in <i>Sesame Street</i> in order of frequency (23 episodes)	173
7.1	Themes in <i>Burning Brands</i> in order of frequency (21 episodes)	207
7.2	Themes in <i>Cultural Flashes</i> in order of frequency (21 episodes)	207

Figures

1	PSC decision-making process	237
2	ASC decision-making process	237

Images

5.1	<i>Sesame Street</i> (SS07) Seesaws of Kareem	155
5.2	<i>Pioneers of Tomorrow</i> (PoT16) discussing friendship	155
5.3	Amani Abu Hantash (right) and co-host Walid Al Sheikh, <i>Cultural Flashes</i>	160
5.4	The Presenter of <i>Burning Brands</i> , Younies Abu Jarad	160

Appendices

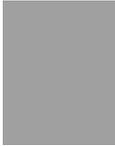
1	Content Analysis Form	306
2	Questions Asked by Researcher to Producers during Fieldwork	307
3	Operational Definitions of Key Themes and Other Terms	309

4	List of newspapers published in Palestine	315
5	Palestinian Media Code of Conduct	316
6	Frequency Tables All Programmes	321
7	List of Personal Interviews	339



Acronyms

AMIDEAST	America-Mideast Educational and Training Services
ASC	Al Aqsa Satellite Channel
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CNN	Cable News Network
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MSNBC	Microsoft and the National Broadcasting Company
PA	Palestinian Authority
PBC	Palestine Broadcasting Corporation
PFLP	Popular Front for Palestine Liberation
PSC	Palestine Satellite Channel
PTSC	Palestine Today Satellite Channel
UHF	Ultra High Frequency
UN	United Nations
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VHF	Very High Frequency



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Abstract

Abstract in English

This study examines the production of Palestinian satellite television in the contemporary era. The focus is on cultural and children's programs of two key stations, the Hamas-based *Al Aqsa Satellite Channel* (ASC) and the Fatah-based *Palestine Satellite Channel* (PSC). The study interrogates how factors beyond simple factional politics come to impact the creation of cultural and children's programming. Even in the polarised political environment of the Palestinian territories, the study shows through close content analysis and qualitative analysis of production, including in-depth producer interviews, that overtly factional media outlets have become 'defactionalised' in terms of content and production values. ASC and PSC producers of cultural and children's programmes are subject to the same technological, social, and economic constraints theorised by Julie D'Acci, Herbert Gans, Todd Gitlin, as other producers. However, the Palestinian context is also distinctive. Since the first and second intifada and the time of the Oslo Accords, the question of whether satellite TV can help transform the previously factional media of both Hamas and the PLO or the Palestinian Authority, is something this study seeks to investigate. Changes in audience reach and production techniques, in the evolution of Israeli occupation, and in the emergence of a new discourse of 'Palestinianism' have all impacted children's and cultural programming in various ways. The result is to temper the role of purely factional politics and propaganda with some degree of 'defactionalisation' of content and approach. Despite the factional structure of Palestinian media, this study argues that producers have striven to overcome divisions and to 'defactionalise' content and production values. ASC and PSC cultural and children's programmes have thus contributed to a renewed sense of a shared identity among Palestinian people across and territories, despite existing within a system still characterised by a politically defined segmented reality.

Abstract in Dutch

Dit onderzoek gaat over de productie van programma's op de Palestijnse satelliettelevisie in de huidige tijd. Het is gericht op twee belangrijke zenders: Al Aqsa Satellite Channel van Hamas en Palestine Satellite Channel van Fatah. In het onderzoek wordt gekeken naar hoe factoren die de alledaagse partijpolitiek overstijgen de ontwikkeling van culturele en kinderprogramma's beïnvloeden, zelfs in het sterk gepolitiseerde klimaat van de Palestijnse gebieden. De onderzoeksmethode is een nauwkeurige inhoudsanalyse in combinatie met kwalitatieve diepte-interviews met producers. In dit proefschrift wordt betoogd dat openlijk verzuilde (partijgebonden) mediakanalen te maken hebben met de technologische, sociale en economische motivaties en beperkingen die worden beschreven in het werk van Julie D'Acci, Herbert Ganz, Todd Gitlin en anderen. De volgende factoren zijn in het bijzonder van invloed geweest op de programmering: veranderingen in publieksbereik en productietechnieken, de ontwikkeling van de Israëlische bezetting en het ontstaan van een nieuw discours over 'Palestijnisme'. Hierdoor spelen pure partijpolitiek en propaganda een minder grote rol. In dit onderzoek wordt betoogd dat producers er ondanks de verzuilde structuur van de Palestijnse media naar streven om inhoud te 'ontzuilen'. Culturele en kinderprogramma's leveren daarmee een bijdrage aan een hernieuwd gevoel van een gemeenschappelijke identiteit onder de mensen in alle Palestijnse gebieden, hoewel deze programma's toch voortkomen uit een systeem dat bepaald wordt door politieke segmentering.

1

Introducing the Research

‘Even in cultural programming, in some situations we have to restrict ourselves to look for topics that do not appear to be pro-PA or pro-Fatah, but rather to look for issues that unite Palestinians’ (Interview: Abu Shammalah, 2013, producer and soundman of Palestinian Satellite Channel’s *Cultural Flashes* program).

1.1 Problem Statement

This study considers the question of how media professionals are influenced by their environment, including the influence of factions in agenda setting and programme content. In the context of satellite TV’s emergence in Palestine, the study shows, through examples of children’s and cultural programmes, how relatively non-factional – or defactionalised – program content can be negotiated by media producers through compromises in terms of themes and values. This enables producers in satellite TV in Palestine to mediate their messages on different levels, so that they may avoid the most overt forms of factionalism. Taking the example of satellite TV, this study suggests that the political influence of factional party elites is far from direct or inevitable in the new forms of media. Instead, a sense of Palestinianism, which is not entirely new, marks a departure, around 2009-2010, from the highly polarised factional situation between Hamas and Fatah in the preceding period. The issue of factionalism and the challenge of meeting the ethical responsibilities of journalists put enormous pressure on journalists and television producers in Palestine. The central question in this research is whether (or not) media content has been defactionalised, taking the example of two children’s and cultural programmes transmitted on Satellite TV, where one would expect the content to be less overtly political than in, say, news or current affairs programmes.

There are both international and Palestinian Codes of Conduct covering journalistic ethics, and we return to the Palestinian code in the concluding chapter, but the personal vision of media professionals is also subject to professional, logistical, ideological, social-cultural and political pressures. There are other pressures related to violations of Palestinian laws and the Israeli military occupation. All these impinge on producers and content, and hence on what satellite TV media produces. Combined, such pressures influence media professionals and create the ‘media ecology’, or working environment in which they are obliged to produce TV programmes.

This first chapter briefly presents and justifies the use of key theoretical concepts of ‘factionalism’ and ‘defactionalisation,’ the overall theoretical framework of the research, the methodological approach adopted and the choice of specific case studies analysed in the study. The process of quantitative content analysis is discussed and placed in its broader theoretical context, and the various stages through which the study will proceed, are explained, including the extended period of fieldwork in which the researcher engaged. A background is provided for each of the four media programmes that serve as case studies, including a summary of their overall content and their respective production environments, tied to the *Al Aqsa Satellite Channel* (ASC) and the Palestinian Satellite Channel (PSC) respectively

The study aims to fill a research gap with regard to how production decisions take place amidst an overall context of occupation. It considers how, even under such conditions, reduced polarisation among rival political factions, may be possible in certain forms of media. Content analysis was organised around carefully selected themes, including nationalism, resistance and social and cultural values, among others (themes elaborated on in Appendix 3, which guide in-depth content analysis in Chapters 6 and 7). Some dominant media representations in the selected cultural and children’s programmes’ content are identified and analysed. The study presents a historical overview of media production in Palestine, and combines this with in-depth comparative analysis of content and production of four selected programmes. In this way, some substance is given to what is meant by ‘factionalism’ and ‘defactionalisation’ in practice, within Palestinian media settings.

Attention is especially focused on how shared cultural symbols, artifacts and the historical heritage of Palestinian identity are expressed in

arts, culture, poetry and music, within the content of these four programmes, and as viewed by their producers and other staff. Content is analysed to show how production decisions and themes within children's and cultural programmes in Palestinian satellite television can include – to varying degrees - both 'factional' and 'defactionalised' modes of media representation. This is the central issue addressed through an extended comparative content analysis, which involves close attention to the two political parties' dominant media representations and their influence over how cultural and children's programmes are produced. The aim of this study is to clarify how factionally influenced political 'narratives' that result from violent inter-factional conflict and competition, come to be translated – or avoided – within media narratives, taking the cases of specific children's and cultural TV programmes as examples.

As each formerly partisan group tries to reach out through the media to larger segments of the national audience in Palestine and beyond, in the diaspora, this study highlights some of the compromises, influences, and decision-making processes involved on the production side. Of the two case studies, the Palestinian Satellite Channel (PSC) and the *Al Aqsa Satellite Channel* (ASC), PSC is closely associated with Fatah, and the second, ASC is identified with Hamas. From the Fatah-oriented PSC, the cultural programme 'Wamadat Thaqa'iyah' (*Cultural Flashes*) and the children's programme 'Shara'a Simsim' (*Sesame Street*) were selected for analysis. Two programmes from the Hamas-oriented ASC were also selected: the cultural programme 'Attikum Beqabs' (*Burning Brand*) and the children's programme 'Row'ad Al Ghad' (*Pioneers of Tomorrow*).

These two sets of programmes have generated both critical and positive commentary internationally and in the region. The work of Yael Warshel, and of New York Times journalist Shapiro, for example, positively evaluated the impact of the PSC's *Sesame Street* on children's ability to imagine peace in Israel and Palestine. However, these studies were conducted before the US Congress ended funding for *Sesame Street* in 2012 (Warshel, 2012, Shapiro, 2009).

The approach to *Pioneers of Tomorrow* has generally been more critical, especially after the 'Mickey Mouse'-like puppet Farfur was allowed to die in martyrdom (Warshel, 2009). All four programmes of the two selected satellite TV channels, are placed in the context of their wider media

environment in Chapter 5, and in-depth programme content is analysed in Chapters 6 and 7, which consider the question of how, and to what extent, defactionalisation of content was evident in the four selected satellite TV programmes. The selected study period is March 2009 to January 2010, immediately after 'Operation Cast Lead,' the 2008-2009 Israeli war on Gaza. The selected study period also followed a 'war of brothers,' which had seen armed clashes between Hamas and Fatah forces. For the selected study period of 10 months, it was fortunate that archival TV episodes were available for all four selected programmes.

There is a real lack of knowledge about the production (rather than consumption) of satellite TV programme content. Especially in post-violence situations, factional, conflict-promoting content may come to be expected from the media. The aim of the study is to determine, through careful comparative media analysis, whether politically-driven media factionalism is evident or whether programme content in the four selected programmes, was largely 'defactionalised' through decisions made by producers. After a period of intensive in-fighting, can the transformative power of satellite mass media communication provide examples of where Palestinian media works to reduce, rather than to intensify, factional 'cold conflict' in Palestine? The term 'cold,' applied to conflict, implies that hostilities are not open or expressed in overt violence, but are suppressed (Gerzon, 2014).

Occupied Palestine is particularly suited for comparative research of media content, ironically because of the Israeli-imposed creation of two separated physical entities: Gaza and the West Bank. However, at the same time the very special features of the Palestinian case also limit how relevant the research findings can be for other situations in the region and beyond. What is observed is that each channel, ASC and PSC, have dominant themes in their programmes, and each has some distinct 'frames of analysis' in each of the two territories, Gaza and the West Bank. This illustrates, better than most other cases could do, how factional and ideological divisions can come to shape the media even when factional agendas appear not to be dominant (Quneis, 2011). The dynamics involved in two forcibly separated sets of areas is also highly relevant to understanding the complex 'clash of ideologies' that can arise and can result in intra-Palestinian conflict. Potentially two 'circuits of media' can result, within one small nation (D'Acci, 2004).

1.2 Justification for the Study

As argued by several Arab ministers of information, the growing attention to debates and dialogue among citizens on satellite TV has amounted to the creation of an ‘offshore democracy’ outside the direct control of political parties (Sakr, 2001: 150). The power of media is evident in the role that satellite TV producers play in making their stations into vehicles of culture. If factionalism and culture are interconnected, then each political faction in Palestine tends to use its culture and ideology to factionalise or defactionalise media production. Until quite recently, few studies focused on how the media operates after violent internal conflicts and under conditions of military occupation (Löffelholz, 2004; Warshel, 2012). This study hopes to contribute to filling this gap.

Since the situation in Palestine is highly distinctive, the study of Palestinian media is critically important, for two main reasons. Firstly, the area is under occupation by a third party, the state of Israel, which is the main reason for there being two forcibly separated entities, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Secondly, what happens in Palestine directly affects regional events due to the location of the Occupied Territories and the resources under the control of neighbouring nations. Due to its influence on global events, the Palestine case presents a unique opportunity to study the effects of how a factional media landscape can become defactionalised. Departing from the usual scholarly perceptions that the media in Palestine is highly politicised and religion-driven, this study focuses on a media landscape through the lens of children’s and cultural programmes. This landscape appears to counter the view that media content in Palestine is unavoidably polarised or factional (Sienkiewicz, 2010).

With the so-called global ‘war on terror,’ Islamic movements have come to be associated, in much international political discourse of the ‘West,’ with religious violence and extremism, leading to a loss of normative legitimacy of more overtly Islamic media content (White, 2011). Yet, at least some of the widespread violence prevalent in Palestinian daily life can also be perceived as a form of resistance against colonial or imperial occupiers (Tawil-Souri, 2009; Zureik, 2001; Gerner, 1994; Harlow, 1987; Chomsky, 1983). Its religious content, however, is rarely celebrated in this study, and more often blamed for subordinating

women and excluding minorities, issues that are discussed later in this study, and especially in Chapter 8.

Palestinians are known to be among the heaviest watchers of TV in the Middle East, as statistics from 2004 show. At that time, 94% of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank had one or more TV sets in their homes (Thawabteh, 2010). Among those, 29% watched *Palestine Satellite Channel* (52% of these were in the Gaza Strip and 43% in the West Bank) (Thawabteh, 2010: 78). Another study specific to Gaza suggested that around the same period, 67.5% of the population in Gaza watched PSC programmes, while 75.5% watched ASC programmes (Al Zanon, 2010). The data is less clear in terms of percentages of Palestinians in the West Bank watching *Al Aqsa Satellite Channel*.

Detailed and reliable media information, such as audience viewing figures, is a valuable commodity in contemporary Palestinian culture, and is used as a political tool for mobilisation here just as it is elsewhere. The figures mentioned above are estimates, and somewhat out of date. Generally it is hard to get hold of reliable data that includes viewer numbers across Palestine. How the lack of available quantitative data was handled by the researcher is explained briefly in a later section of this chapter, and then in more detail in Chapter 3.

The latest technology is used by both Hamas and Fatah, including short message services (SMSs) to alert their supporters about public events and to allow the public to interact with TV programmes (Bishara, 2009). This technique was first used by Fatah and PSC during the Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005; SMSs are now more often used by Hamas to promote viewer feedback and engagement with ASC TV programmes.

Satellite media are important in terms of 'factionalising' information into sound bites. No media can be politically neutral, and even in an open pluralistic society, there will always be politically affiliated journalists and independent ones (Kester, 2008; Mellor, 2007; Hallin and Mancini, 2004; Mancini, 2000; Waisbord, 2000). Satellite TV has played a vital role in informing the public by reaching homes 24/7, without much requirement for interactivity or expensive equipment. The technology ensures that satellite TV can reach geographically dispersed audiences relatively easily, as was demonstrated in the case of the Arab Spring where there were few obstacles to satellite TV networks, which also

compete: ‘...in the political and religious playing fields... through the use of entertainment and pop culture’ as well as in news (Bishara, 2012:185).

Satellite television rather than internet media was chosen, because in satellite TV, the production of media content is much more clearly distinguishable from the reception by ‘audiences’ than in social media. The production-reception distinction tends to break down in new social media. This makes it easier to analyse the specific role of producers, and their choices, in the case of satellite TV (Hroub and Quneis, 2011).

One of the particular attractions for Palestinian audiences, of satellite TV as a form of media, is that its programmes are transmitted across and around some of the most segregated spaces and spatial divisions on earth – those between Gaza, Israel and the West Bank. Yet even satellite TV producers, and new forms of social media, cannot ignore the sharp divisions imposed between various parts of Palestine under military occupation, divided by the separation wall, checkpoints and legal barriers. This duality, as well as the striking lack of studies dealing with media operations after wars, makes the Palestinian case a fascinating one (Löffelholz, 2004). In the past, audience studies have been more common than studies of production content and decisions. This is another reason that the main focus of this study is both on program content and production processes and decisions in the two satellite TV channels, as they emerge in the four selected programmes (Mayer, Banks and Caldwell, 2009).

According to several scholars (Greenfield, 2014; Skuse et al., 2011; Mares and Pan, 2013; Sakr, 2007) there is a real scarcity of analysis of the content and messages of children’s and cultural programming, not just in Palestine but also more generally. From a review of relevant literature, it seems that this study on the content and production process of selected media programmes is also more or less unique in its explicit reference to ‘defactionalisation’ (Sieberer, 2013). It will combine an emerging literature on media content analysis with new approaches to analysing media and television production processes. The premise of this research, which underpins its central questions, is a situation in which two (or more) political factions of the political leadership own and directly control two (or more) separate media outlets. This research aims at contributing insights in a field in which little prior research is available. It does this through a painstaking content analysis of four children’s and

cultural programmes, combined with analysis based on extended interviews with producers from both ASC and PSC, who provided rich insights that informed the study, complementing the researcher's own experiential knowledge of Palestinian media production (see Appendix 7 for list of interviewees).

The study found that Palestinian TV children's and cultural programming producers include in their overall aims, the aims of: (i) educating people, especially children but also adults, and of (ii) documenting and reinforcing the national identity of Palestinians. Over time, these two kinds of thematic programming have increased, and have become products which donor groups are willing to support, for two main reasons:

- Children's and cultural TV programmes are media products that are expected to contain less overtly factionalised or party political content.
- By funding children's and cultural programmes, donors feel they are contributing in some way to the future of Palestinian people's progress and development, and to forms of expression that encourage peaceful outcomes.

This research feeds into and seeks to inform such funders and decision-makers in the international and regional arena as well. These include some members of the US Congress and Senate who pressed for a freeze of USAID funding for the Palestinian TV programme 'Sesame Street' in early 2012. This call for a freeze came in response to Mahmoud Abbas calling at the UN for Palestinian statehood. Yet the study highlights that supporting children's and cultural satellite TV does make sense as Palestinian media practices have evolved rapidly even amidst the first and second Intifada, and the wars that followed (Bishara, 2009).

The driving role that media can play as a cultural force, is perhaps most evident in children's educational programming (Kirkorian et al., 2008). Even though little academic research has been done on the cultural and children's programmes of ASC and PSC, some of these programmes have in the past been commented on in the international media, and in Western donor circles, as well as in the more immediate region of Palestine. There have been calls to end the broadcast of certain TV programmes by Israeli watchdog groups, most of these groups based in the US or EU. The producers of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* have been

accused of being too radical (Barker, 2010), and *Sesame Street* was alleged to have run ‘afoul of basic...guidelines’, not adhering closely enough to the requirements of donors that content should be standardized internationally (Shapiro, 2009).

To date, the kind of research that has been done elsewhere on the role of media in fostering civil violence has not been done with regard to the case of Palestine (Zarkov, 2007; Payne, 2005). A growing number of researchers have questioned the effects of media bias on the part of the twin authorities in Palestine (Sienkiewicz, 2012; Abuzanouna, 2012; Thawabteh, 2010; Abu M’olaa, 2009; Kumsieh, 2009). Yet, to date, not much research has been done on Palestinian children’s media, in relation to the question of Palestinian identity and the overall context of occupation (Blank, 2011; Walshel, 2012).

This study aims to extend available knowledge on these topics, and may contribute to an improved understanding of the politics of media production in post-conflict situations. The main focus of the research, however, is on something few researchers have dealt with – the local politics of Palestinian media production and how this influences production content. The topic is especially important in light of increasing understanding of how influential a role media can have in highly polarised and violent situations, and an awareness of media producers’ need to respect ethics and take seriously their responsibilities. These important ethical dimensions of the study are explored further in Section 1.6 of this chapter.

The manipulation of media serves to perpetuate many conflicts, including those in Palestine, rather than open a pathway toward their resolution. And in the end, the public loses (Howard, 2015; Almoghayer, 2010). History suggests that societies can grow and mature exponentially in times of peace. They tend to slowly descend toward self-destruction when engaged in perpetual war and violent conflict, conditions that can coexist with formal ‘peace’ agreements. Furthermore, violence disperses populations and thus can be said to retard intellectual and cultural growth, commerce, science and local opportunities (Keen, 2006; Swedenburg, 1995; Blaufarb and Tanham, 1989). The study of factional media within Palestine is of importance to media studies in general, particularly when it explores, as this study does, how Palestinian nationalism may override or start to work against internal differences among

the main political parties and factions that control the Palestinian media (Kananeh and Nusair, 2010; Massad, 1995; Swedenburg, 1995).

1.3 General Background to the Study

The pervasive influence of television on both children and adults remains an important part of many studies of media, despite the growing influence of social media. The main focus of this study, however, is on media production processes and on content rather than on audience reception or production (Mayer, 2009). Since the media are known to be prone to manipulation and distortion, especially because of short time-horizons, seeking an end to factional forms of media expression can seem illusory, but is, nevertheless, vital in situations of actual or potential factional in-fighting (Kellner, 2004; Halliday, 1997).

This PhD research builds on previous Masters-level work on expressions of factionalism in the printed news media in Palestine, immediately prior to the violent clashes between Hamas and Fatah in 2007, something also studied more recently by Beverley Milton-Edwards (Milton-Edwards, 2013; Almoghayer, 2010). My own study showed how the Hamas-oriented *Al Resala* and Fatah-oriented *Al Karama* newspapers content tended to worsen antagonisms by using inflammatory language in reporting. Key issues were selected to illustrate this, including news coverage of corruption, financial reforms and military aid. Factionalism was evident in both the content and the withholding of critical information that could have benefitted dialogue and avoided damage to local communities and to the wider peace processes (Khalaf, 2008).

Following the military confrontation between Fatah and Hamas in 2007 and the Israeli wars on Gaza in 2008-9 and thereafter, many people in Palestine prefer to avoid such internecine, faction-based politics. In line with this wider move towards ending conflictual attitudes between the factions represented by political parties in Palestine, the present study looks at other forms of TV production besides news. Children's and cultural programmes were selected, since one aim of the present study is to discover whether content and production were able to move beyond factionalism in Palestinian satellite TV media production after the 'war of brothers' in 2007 and the Israeli war on Gaza in 2008-9.

During the Fatah-Hamas clashes, ASC news broadcasts were noticeably active in defending Hamas-led government actions. The *Al*

Aqsa Satellite Channel is part of the Al Aqsa Media Network and was launched after Hamas won a majority of seats in the parliamentary elections of 2006. It mostly presents the views of Hamas leaders and the Islamic movement's political discourses in its news coverage (Barker, 2010). In the past few years, however, ASC has gained popularity among Palestinians and also across the Middle East, among others in cultural and children's TV programmes (Alshaer, 2012). Evidence suggests both PSC and ASC are maintaining their popularity and ratings, including during the period of this study, as evidence from Al Zanon's study already suggested, which showed that whilst two third of Gazans watch PSC programmes, three quarters watch ASC programmes (Al Zanon, 2010). Reliable data is lacking for the West Bank, and for viewing figures of Palestinians watching other regional satellite channels, such as Al Jazeera and MBC.

Under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, the Palestinian Satellite Channel was initially established as a state television channel in 1996. The Voice of Palestine radio station was also part of the Palestine Broadcasting Corporation (PBC), broadcasting from its headquarters in the Gaza Strip. In 1996, former Palestinian President Yasser Arafat appointed Fatah leader Radwan Abu Ayyash as overall Director of PSC (Jamal, 2000), and the US government funded PSC for two years, ending funding after 1998 (Brynen and El-Rifai, 2007). In 1999, PSC started its pilot broadcasting phase with 7 hours per day for approximately 6 months on Nilesat moon, and then to Arabsat moon (these are both major satellite regulators in the Middle East). Until 2005, the PSC was administrated by Fatah's minister of information Nabil Shaat (Sakr, 2007), but in 2000, the PSC headquarters in Gaza were bombed several times by Israeli missiles.

Satellite media arrived relatively late in Palestine. Even beforehand, when Palestinian TV (the non-digital forerunner of the PSC) entered the scene, its lively imagery, characters and script brought about a profound change in how citizens received media messages and how TV operated as a media tool of political party organisations. Palestinian TV appeared relatively late in comparison with other Arab TV stations, and then factional messages and agendas enabled it to compete and spread more widely.

Initially, PSC was the only satellite TV outlet which could be viewed outside of Palestine. The 2006 elections, however, brought both political changes and more local satellite TV channels. A distinctly Palestinian media has gradually and unevenly emerged, as Chapter 2 will show, from a series of conflicts and forms of occupation and colonisation. During every stage of Palestinian media development, foreign powers have exercised control, throughout the periods of the Ottoman Empire (not covered in this study but published in Omer, 2015), the British Mandate, Jordanian rule in the West Bank, Egyptian rule in Gaza, and the ongoing Israeli occupation. In addition, local factional agendas, Western patrons and donors and various civil institutions have impacted on the nature of the Palestinian media as it has emerged. The emergence of satellite TV, quite recently, is first outlined in this chapter, before Chapter 2 goes on to provide historical precedents and to contextualise this recent emergence of new forms of media, including satellite TV, in the Palestinian territories.

Since local TV stations first appeared in Palestine in the early 1990s, it has become possible for those living in Gaza or the West Bank, Jerusalem or elsewhere, to pick up signals and watch TV through 'receiver' machines from Palestine, Israel, elsewhere in the Middle East and beyond the region. This poignantly highlights how freedom to move around the virtual world contrasts with the physical restrictions imposed on movement in and out of camps, of Gaza, of the West Bank and in and out of Israel. Such restrictions on physical movement across territories of historic Palestine are very evident in the separation wall and in multiple checkpoints.

This study tentatively suggests that between the first and second *intifada* and the time of the Oslo Accords, the relatively positive and more peace-oriented influence of satellite TV, compared with the printed press and its relatively narrow focus on political news, became clear. It is also suggested that this may even have been a factor in reducing violence between Hamas and the PLO/Palestinian Authority to a 'cold conflict' rather than open hostilities and violence. Instead, such antagonisms become latent rather than being openly expressed through use of violence (Gerzon, 2014).

Obviously, there are constant changes in the relations between Hamas and Fatah. Whereas Fatah began as a revolutionary organisation, it now takes part in state building, and its vision of attaining Palestinian

statehood is also apparent in much of PSC's TV programming. Hamas, on the other hand, following Israel's attack on Gaza in 2008-2009, began a process of reconstruction, by replacing what was destroyed during that time (Milton-Edwards, 2013). The ASC programme discourse started to include more international themes and actors, alongside the predominance of local themes and actors. In a nutshell, ASC represents itself as a Palestinian media outlet, humanistic in outlook but within a broader Islamic logic, whilst PSC sees itself as a more secular media outlet, with a nationalist logic first and foremost. Some of the content analysis later reveals that these self-perceptions do not always match the realities of programme content, however.

As factionalism has been gradually pushed aside, following the 2009 national unity agreement, it was indeed hoped that Palestinian satellite media would start to focus on issues that unite rather than divide Palestinians. This is what the study explores - whether, since 2009, Palestinian satellite TV media producers of children's and cultural programmes, have generally focused their coverage on values that reinforce national agendas, or not. One interesting aspect of this is to consider whether the intensified Israeli occupation, its impacts and shared forms of resistance to it in recent years, can help reinforce a sense of common Palestinian identity across the media (Tawil-Souri, 2009). A particular focus on the Israeli occupation may be one of the major reasons for the relative success of satellite TV stations in Palestine. PSC, in particular, became a main source of news, bringing accurate narratives related to the position of Fatah and the Palestinian Authority on the topic of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. On the other hand, ASC plays an important role in informing the audience with regard to the position of Hamas in countering negotiations, and in its inside coverage of the ongoing conflict and Israeli attacks (Alshaer, 2012).

After a period of political polarisation in Gaza, the past few years appear to have been relatively calm in terms of political competition (Yousef, 2015). There has been a gradual move across the media towards new technologies. Viewers in Palestine, whether in Gaza or in the West Bank, can now read news headlines from around the world on-line. They can watch a choice of satellite TV channels through updated satellite dishes by pressing a few buttons on the remote control.

Palestinian TV channels compete with wider Arab satellite media. Going through the satellite channels in 2015, one finds a huge choice of TV stations, with the number of Arabic-language channels numbering over 850 by 2013 (Mussa, 2011: 24). The number of channels increased even more after the Arab Spring, especially among new political parties and movements that started their own satellite TV stations (Milton-Edwards, 2013). Libya, for example, has approximately 19 TV channels, all accessible to any Arab citizen through the receiver box, even if the quality is highly variable. Channels provide space for entertainment, politics, culture, children's programmes, sports and religion.

In 2010, among Arab TV channels, 609 were privately owned, and 124 were government-owned (Mussa, 2011:25). In terms of the focus of their content, 243 were public interest channels, 90 focused on music, 61 on dramas, 37 on news, 59 on sports, 17 on business and the economy and 53 were religious channels (Mussa, 2011: 25). There were around 5 children's channels and 20 cultural channels at the same time. Among the main Palestinian TV outlets broadcasting within Palestine at the time of research, were *Al Montada* (The Forum), *Falsteen Al Youm* (Palestine Today), and *Falsteen Al Ghad* (Palestine Tomorrow).

Palestinian satellite media have not yet attained the impressive level of diversity of Arab satellite TV. A majority of media outlets in Palestine are still linked to specific, narrow political agendas and cover news, culture, music, drama and sports, all in a single channel (Tawil-Souri, 2011). Being tied to specific political groupings or factions also means that Palestinian satellite TV may not have as much appeal beyond the Palestinian audiences at home and abroad. Their social, political, cultural and economic objectives may not appear as relevant outside of Palestinian audiences, and this may make it difficult for them to compete for larger viewing figures or sources of financial support.

The large number of factional media outlets from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip reflects the political division between the two most prominent political parties, Fatah and Hamas (Al-Omari, 2010). At certain times in the past, TV media and satellite TV media, including those with children's programmes and cultural programmes, have engaged in aggressive discourses which expressed, and may also have worsened, military confrontations between Fatah and Hamas. When Hamas won the majority vote in the 2006 elections, it also created ASC as its own media to compete with Fatah's PSC. This enabled Hamas, at least

initially, to present its own point of view and advocate for its own political, economic and social agendas across Palestinian audiences. This in turn reinforced a schism in media structures, largely the result of the geographical division imposed by the Israeli occupation and the military blockade of Gaza (Rabbani, 2008).

As one study documented, in 2009 around 80% of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza relied on TV as their main source of news and information, rather than newspapers, as was the case a decade or so before (Al-Omari, 2010:57). A study by the Jerusalem Media and Communication Center (JMCC, Poll 69, October, 2009 n.p.; JMCC, Poll 26, 1998 n.p.) indicated that the number of Palestinians who owned satellite dishes was already high at the start of the first Intifada, and increased from 92% at the time of the second Intifada (2000-2005) to 95.4% by October 2008 (Al Faqeh, 2011). This was a very different situation from that in the 1980s, when only one or two homes in each neighbourhood could afford to own a TV. Neighbours would gather in the house with a TV, to watch the evening news and then to discuss it.

The number of factional TV and radio stations increased in Palestine, during and after the internal Fatah-Hamas conflict. Some studies have suggested that these channels, including the ASC and the PSC, played an important role in actually igniting violence (Hroub and Quneis, 2011). According to these studies, they did this by broadcasting incitement to violence, including provocative material that sought to justify military confrontation, for example in 2007. This in turn, may have enabled Hamas to maintain its control over Gaza and left the PA/Fatah with nominal control only over the occupied West Bank (Rabbani, 2008). Palestinian factions in both Gaza and the West Bank received permits to launch their own TV channels. However, in several cases, these licenses were not used to broadcast from within Palestine, and most TV channels continued to broadcast from outside the Palestinian territories (Al Behisi, 2011). Unusually, both PSC and ASC made use of their licenses to broadcast from within the Palestinian territories.

Since the Palestinian media are part of a larger network of Middle Eastern Arabic media, factional satellite media sometimes compete or work in alliance with outside media platforms. For example, the ASC works in the same model as Hezbollah Satellite TV channel *Al Manar* (Harb, 2011; Jumhour, 2009). Of course, local and external factionalised

agendas can also be influenced, or even imposed, by donors, which can result in selective programming choices. ‘There is no media without financial support...[and] funding imposes conditions on the discourse and content’ (Al Faqeh, 2011: 21). It can be argued that over time a polarised media can reinforce a political Palestinian media culture that is divided into its respective parts, physically, virtually, or both (Skuse et al, 2011). The media tend to mirror a polarised society, with division among factions reflected back to the public of Palestinians at large, in Gaza, the West Bank, Jerusalem, Israel, and in the wider diaspora.

In contrast to this is the view that the factionalism of the Palestinian media, including satellite TV media, does not only arise from, but in turn also reinforces, the fragmentation of Palestinian society and a high degree of internal social alienation (Jumhour, 2009). Palestinian audiences may attempt to escape the factional media by tuning into other Arab satellite TV channels, as one study suggests (Al-Omari, 2010). One popular channel, *Al Filistenya*, attracts audiences with its satirical programming, something factional TV outlets generally do not include in their programming. This makes *Al Filistenya* a leader in the emerging Arabic comedy industry (Al Shayyeb, 2012). Overall, in a more competitive situation where audiences matter, most local TV stations are trying to break out of factionalism, and to gain higher audience ratings on some other basis, by broadcasting via UHF (Ultra High Frequencies) instead of VHF (Very High Frequencies) in an effort to reach out to wider audiences, including Arabic speakers beyond the Palestinian territories and the Palestinian diaspora.

1.4 Objectives and Key Questions

The objective of this research is to examine in-depth how factional media becomes defactionalised, by using some examples that can illustrate this, namely cultural and children’s programmes from two broadcasting channels, *Al-Aqsa Satellite Channel* (ASC) associated with Hamas and the *Palestine Satellite Channel* (PSC), which is Fatah-based. The study has four aims:

- **To contextualise.** The historical and social context of political struggle between two factions, both involved in Satellite TV content and production processes, is extremely important. The factional media are viewed as more proactive than passive, not only being

shaped by ideology during periods of relative political calm, but also fashioning such ideologies themselves. As Bielby and Harrington argue in their book, *Global TV: Exporting Television and Culture in the World Market*, almost every country around the world ‘produces television domestically within a distinctive national broadcast system’ (2008: 11). Additionally, this study links the production and content of selected Palestinian satellite TV media programmes with the wider context of satellite TV media across the Middle East and the longer-term history of media in and across Palestine (Thawabteh, 2010; Al-Hassani, 2010; Saleh, 2010; Kumsieh, 2009; Kraidy & Khalil, 2009; Sakr, 2001; Maiola and Ward, 2007). This helps to understand the active role and deeper workings of media in Palestine.

- **To examine content analysis thematically.** The focus is on both quantitative and qualitative analysis of the content of children’s and cultural program on two Palestinian satellite TV stations that are factionally organised – but perhaps also ‘defactionalising’, during the study period of March 2009 to January 2010. Less attention is paid to overtly political elements of Palestinian media broadcasting, since this study considers the specific signs that cultural and children’s programming reflect wider elements of the national society, beyond the factions. It does this by identifying the presence and absence of pre-selected themes, and interpreting the quantitative data using a theoretical framework that is a synthesis of content analysis and media production approaches.
- **To theorise ‘defactionalised’ media production and trace new forms of emergent ‘Palestinianism’.** Media production in factional and post-conflict societies can become another weapon in the battle for hearts and minds (Durham, and Kellner, 2001; Entman, 1993, 2007). This study aims to explore how producers negotiate ‘circuits of media,’ and how they manage programming in a way that avoids factionalism. The aim is to contribute to conceptual clarification for academics and others interested in Middle Eastern media, of what is meant by ‘defactionalisation’. Collecting evidence about the content and production of satellite TV programmes in the two competing stations helps illustrate where the selected programmes’ forms of representation and their content converge – or defactionalise – and where they are more polarised or factional. To put this in another way, this

study seeks signs of both ‘factionalism’ and ‘defactionalisation’, between Fatah and Hamas, through analysing media content and producers’ values, through the lens of selected children’s and cultural programmes (Abuzanouna, 2015; Sieberer, 2013).

Above all, the study is an exploration of specific examples of what has here been termed: ‘media factionalism’ and ‘media defactionalisation’. Nine key themes were selected with field supervisors, following initial viewing of the programmes. These were used to then code production content. These themes and their selection are justified in sub-section 1.6 of this chapter. Though data on the production process is hard to obtain, it is important to answer the question of how ‘circuits of media’ translate into daily practices of producers. Different aspects of media production and content are explored, and the key interactions between media producers, their context, political elites, non-dominant groups and technologies are deduced.

As explained at the start of this chapter, the focus of the study is on four selected programmes - *Sesame Street* of PSC and *Pioneers of Tomorrow* of ASC both being children’s programmes, and cultural programmes which are *Cultural Flashes*, broadcast by PSC, and ASC’s *Burning Brands*. There is a strong comparative element to these choices, allowing some contrasts and similarities to emerge not only between two children’s programmes and two cultural programmes, but also between programming and content of the two competing satellite TV channels (ASC and PSC), each linked with competing political parties that are termed ‘factions’ in this study. For all episodes of the selected programmes, originally broadcast in the period March 2009 to January 2010 (a total of 88 episodes,) the main research questions are as follows:

1. What political, social and other contextual factors influence the day-to-day decisions of producers of these programmes and how do they communicate through media in a ‘factional’ or ‘defactionalised’ way?
2. In the local, regional and global context, how does the content and production of the four children’s and cultural programmes in these two satellite TV stations communicate issues in relation to the nine selected themes?

The first main question relates to themes and content, and how these are influenced, represented and produced, whereas the second considers the

implications of how concepts are communicated, in relation to the notion of defactionalisation of media. The first task is to observe the key themes that appear in both channels' programmes, using a 'circuits of media' approach as proposed by D'Acci (2004). This also requires an element of analysis of the politics of representation, as proposed by both Stuart Hall (1997) and Richard Johnson (1986), among others. The second main question draws on a wider set of theoretical factors from the literature on media production (Mayer, Banks and Caldwell, 2009; Shoemaker and Resse, 1996; Gans, 1979; Gitlin, 1980), in order to facilitate a better understanding of defactionalisation in the context of Palestinian media production. In addition, a number of sub-questions were identified, in relation to the broader questions above:

- a. What relevant economic and political factors have shaped programme content and production decisions in the selected episodes?
- b. Who influences day-to-day working practices and production processes in the two satellite TV stations, and decision-making in the production of the selected children's and cultural programmes?
- c. Are non-dominant groups reflected in, or able to influence, content and production in the four selected programmes?
- d. What are the critical 'sites' in the 'circuit of media' for each station's programmes in terms of factionalism and 'de-factionalising' television content?

These four sub-questions help operationalise the way in which the two main overarching questions are addressed. The first two sub-questions contextualise production processes and content. The third asks about non-dominant actors, and the fourth sub-question examines some critical 'sites' in the 'circuit of media' of each station's programme content. Overall, the answers require examples and analysis of their significance, drawing both on content of episodes and producer-oriented evidence of whether and how the ASC's and PSC's children's and cultural programmes were relatively defactionalised during the relevant period of analysis.

1.5 Factionalism and Defactionalisation of Media

It is clear that media in conflict zones, including the Palestinian media, can be used as a form of incitement, regardless of whether the conflict involves violence or is a conflict of words without overt violence. The responsibility of media for incitement of violence was reasserted legally in the ‘media trial’ of producers and journalists at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. The history professor Nahimana and others were found guilty of crimes of incitement of genocide, and of genocide (Kaid, 2011; Thompson, 2007). Since official TV media outlets can present issues ‘either as exaggerated media fantasy or [as] instigated from the outside’ (Bishara, 2012:185), this kind of conflict, involving indirect rather than physical violence, is precisely what Palestinian media has been accused of at times, including by Western politicians and media. The role of the media in relation to violence and conflict – including conflicts with religious overtones – is recognised in both popular and scholarly discourse (Abu M’olaa, 2009; Zarkov, 2007; Payne, 2005).

Biases in reporting on the Middle East and beyond and the effects of such biased reporting on global events have been well documented internationally (Bishara, 2012; Dickson, 1994; Patterson, 1993). Following the 2006 elections, the Hamas Islamic movement entered mainstream politics and introduced a new dimension to broader Palestinian politics, in the form of religion-based resistance discourses (Brown, 2010; Brittain, 2008). Different definitions of factions and factionalism are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 (see for example Boucek, 2009; Boucek, 2012). According to one academic observer, factional media tend to embrace forms of ‘simplistic oppositional discourse’, with each side aiming at hegemony (Abu-Lughod, 2004). Early research already indicated that media in Palestine was subservient to particular ‘factional’ forms of power struggles.

The role of the media, post-conflict, as key actors and not just as passive rapporteurs, is now widely acknowledged in scholarly literature (for recent reviews, see Flew and Waisboard, 2015; Fridh and Wingren, 2015; Pink, 2015; Dimaggio, 2009). However, in the modes of expression of two factions – one with a strong ‘religious’ identity, and the other with a renowned history of secularism – appearances may be deceptive (Al Barghouti, 2012; Daouwd, 2011). Later chapters will show that content

does not smoothly equate with the factional basis of ASC and PSC as media outlets.

The conflict between Hamas and Fatah was played out in the media even prior to the outbreak of physical violence between the two factions in June 2007. This conflict was conducted in a highly polarised way between two factions, one labelled 'religious' by its critics, or 'fundamentalist,' and the other, ostensibly nationalist, being labeled 'moderate' or 'secular' by the other side, and as overly willing to compromise. Each side used the media to fight this war of words, which according to the Al Quds newspaper (2010) started to appear in sound bites using TV channels. From a Western perspective, the squabbles were between a secular Fatah and religious Hamas. Yet, in media reporting in the period prior to June 2007, hostility between the two factions was not always expressed through religious or secular narratives. Other issues could take priority, such as mutual accusations of corruption or of a lack of legitimate leadership or political vision (Al-Omari, 2010; Khalaf, 2008).

Even so, for the US and European politicians and public officials, a sharp distinction is still drawn between two polarised ideologies, distinguishing the secular nationalism of Fatah from the Islamism of Hamas (Yousef, 2013). Regionally and internationally, the reactions to both PSC and ASC programmes, particularly children's programmes, have sometimes been intense. Media outlets ranging from America's *National Public Radio* (NPR), *ABC*, *The New York Times*, UK's *The Telegraph*, *BBC* and scores of Arabic media outlets and bloggers' spheres in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Yemen and Jordan, have all commented on these programmes. Some have praised their programmes in glowing terms and others have responded mockingly or more critically. The online version of *Der Spiegel* (2007) reported: 'Children who watch "Tomorrow's Pioneers" might learn to rattle off the names of world leaders better than those who grew up with the real Mickey.' "We will win, Bush!" Farfur¹ squeaks at one point. "We will win, Condoleezza! We will win, Olmert! We will win Sharon." *The Daily Mail* online edition (July 23, 2008), under the heading 'Pictured: The TV rabbit preaching hatred and telling young Muslims to "kill and eat Jews"', described the *Al Aqsa Satellite Channel* (ASC) as a TV station that teaches hatred to children. Some scholarly studies have also discussed what is seen as the

politicisation of children's TV programmes, especially of ASC (Warner, 2015; Fuenzalida, 2015; Shmueli, 2014).

Although this view of rising extremism is still popular in the Western media, in the past few years, Fatah and Hamas have started to compete through discourses, through media and in political and religious arenas, with some surprising results. After examining how children's and cultural television programmes are produced, and analysing their content, the more polarised view of Palestinian political realities may not apply, or at least not in the specific cases of ASC and PSC children's and cultural programmes considered here, and not during the selected study period (March 2009-January 2010). In other words, the ASC and PSC may not simply be media extensions of two distinct factions involved in Palestinian governance; and their producers may have some capacity to move content beyond a narrow bi-polar factionalism (Sienkiewicz, 2012).

As argued by Mansour (2013), anyone who has followed PSC programmes in the past few years would notice that, especially since 2009, the channel started to reach out to more diverse Palestinian and Arab audiences, as a direct result of improvements in programming. The Palestinian national administration started to pay closer attention to cultural and intellectual affairs, and not only to politics, news and peace negotiations. Mansour was Head of Planning at the PSC when the fieldwork for this study was conducted, and his argument can be viewed in one of two ways. Either he could be exaggerating the reach of the PSC, or he could be highlighting the efforts of the PSC to produce less factional media content, especially since 2009. Mansour himself has played a leading part in the PSC's shift of focus towards more intellectual and cultural programming, which can be taken as a possible indicator of a trend towards 'defactionalisation', away from media factionalism.

A similar message was conveyed in an interview with the head of PSC's programming, who stated: 'we are tired of politics and blood – some people also want to listen to a poem, a song, or a child singing' (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013).² Palestine TV (another way of referring to the PSC) began to sense that even Palestinians living inside Israel felt a sense of ownership of the channel's programmes, since they were calling in and offering suggestions as to what they would like to see (Mansour, 2013).

Just like PSC, ASC also became aware of the relevance of new developments as it started to shift its focus, away from focusing

exclusively on news and politics, towards more cultural and educational programmes. The ASC's editorial board, established in 2006, began to shift their message from local to more regional and even global audiences, who came to depend on ASC as a window into what was going on in Palestine, and especially inside Gaza (Interview: Al Bardawil, Head of ASC's Board, 2013). This internationalisation of the audience also encourages compromise on some production decisions that influence content, as channels compete to gain hegemonic power over audiences (Gramsci, 1971). This made the ASC consider reviewing its vision so that it maintained the Islamic constants and principles, but was also more aware of attracting and keeping more diversified audiences. This is significant, since as Al Bardawil said in an interview with the researcher (2013): '...children's and cultural programming are among the few areas not affected by the bones of factionalism.' This study critically assesses this statement.

Since the internal fighting of 2007, both the ASC and the PSC have attempted to appear to speak for broader and more universal interests. They both wish to become the voice for all Palestinians and beyond, perhaps hoping to become a voice of authority in the manner of Al Jazeera or the BBC in current affairs. However, to do so they must appeal to more universal ideals than those implied by factionalism, and this must be reflected in the content of programmes, in relation to the key themes explored later in this chapter. If media moves beyond factionalism then the content of programmes should, by definition, speak to more than factional audiences. Examining the tensions and trends of efforts to move beyond factional satellite TV content, is something worth exploring in order to be able to established whether Palestinian satellite TV shows signs of moving away from more factional forms of media production of the past.

Cultural debates on Palestinian TV have always revolved around the politics of representation, including that which has been visible in children's programming (Tawil-Souri, 2011). Although each station can be seen as overtly political in its goals, what this study explores is how competition for growing satellite TV audiences can shift dynamics of representation and contestation, perhaps resulting in less overtly ideologically media content, and in a shift of production values in the direction of media 'defactionalisation'.

Factors such as the economic constraints on producers, and how this influences the content of media production, are also considered in this study, though mostly in passing. Economic stability plays an important role in the professionalism, and the lack thereof hampers most Palestinian media professionals. Perhaps with better economic prospects and a reasonable quality of life, more media professionals could afford to adhere to higher ethical and professional standards (Al-Omari, 2010). Journalists without a stable income to cover their basic family essentials and those of their family are more likely to be prone to unprofessionalism. They may feel obliged to forfeit their ethics in order to attain their basic minimum needs. In this way, the media environment is affected by the economic climate, and this in turn influences the quality of TV programming offered by Palestinian satellite media to the public. For instance, the financial capacity of the ASC is much lower than that of the PSC.

Movement restrictions in Palestine and the terrible economic situation have both forced senior media professionals to move out of Palestine in search for new opportunities, usually through finding work with foreign media organisations. Overall, processes of de-escalation of factionalism have received little attention in the past, but they do take place in this adverse economic climate. The everyday compromises involved in production processes within Palestinian satellite TV stations like ASC and PSC have received relatively little academic attention so far. Since not everything can be covered in Chapter 1, on-going debates around definitions of factionalism and defactionalisation, and how these relate to other, related concepts, are returned to in more depth in Chapter 3.

1.6 Synthetic Methodologies

As a useful yardstick for assessing the extent of 'defactionalisation' in cultural and children's satellite TV programmes, the 'circuits of media' approach, associated with D'Acci (2004), is used alongside content analysis methods. This mixed methodological approach draws on the successful research of Shoemaker and Reese (1996), which is itself based on a combination of the work of Gans (1979) and Gitlin (1980). Gans' and Gitlin's studies are used as part of the theoretical framework, to produce a synthetic, or mixed, overall set of methodologies for this study. This kind of approach is seen as useful to examine both media

content in relation to specific programme episodes, and production, including factors that influence the people who produce media programmes. Institutional factors (socio-historical context, cultural artifacts and production processes) will influence the content of children's and cultural programming in Palestine as elsewhere, and will all be identified in this study. For divided and conflict-riven societies, it is especially important to be aware of how a complex mix of factors influences content and production decisions in relation to specific programmes, like ASC and PSC children's and cultural programmes.

This study will explore the extent to which PSC and ASC as institutions, and the media professionals working inside them, are trying to find compromises and adjust their messages so as to avoid alienating viewers. And it will ask how they do this whilst pleasing those who provide the funds. Each station may recruit people who do not necessarily believe in or follow the faction associated with that station, though such people will rarely make it to senior or controlling positions.

To keep track of the 10 months of data, and to make sense of the collected materials and interviews, the methodology is divided into three parts. For the purposes of content analysis, 160 episodes of the four programmes were obtained – and 88 were selected randomly to be analysed. These included roughly equal number of episodes of two cultural programmes '*Wamadat Thaqafiyya*' (Cultural Flashes) produced by ASC and '*Attikum Beqabs*' (Burning Brands) produced by PSC, as well as two children's programmes: ASC's '*Row'ad Al Ghad*' (Pioneers of Tomorrow) and PSC's '*Shari Simsim*' (Sesame Street). Originally the plan was to select 10-15 episodes of each programme, in order to create a manageable sample. Eventually it was agreed with field supervisors to select 23 episodes of each children's programme, and 21 episodes of each cultural programme. This selection was done randomly, covering the entire period of 10 months, from the second half of March 2009 to the middle of January 2010.

The content of programmes will be analysed using key themes identified and agreed with field supervisors after initially viewing all episodes. These themes are seen to be of importance in the local context, whether they are present or not in the content of programmes. The themes were selected to assist in assessing how 'defactionalised' or 'factionalised' media content seemed to be.³ Fuller definitions are

provided in Chapter 3.5 and in Appendix 3. The final list was agreed in consultation with two field supervisors and other experts, and includes themes seen as significant for analysing content in both children's and cultural programmes in relation to how factional or defactionalised such content might be. The nine selected key themes for content analysis are as follows:

- nationalism
- religious values
- citizens' rights and obligations
- resistance
- social values
- cultural values
- political values
- educational values
- entertainment

These nine particular themes were selected for three reasons.

1. First, in early viewing of episodes of TV programmes, these themes were found either to occur frequently or to be notably – and sometimes surprisingly - absent.
2. Secondly, several of the themes related to debates around 'enhancing democratic communications' in Palestine (Abuzanouna, 2012:51). The specific thematic content of PSC and ASC children's and cultural programmes could then be linked with attention to the 'democratisation' of Palestine. As Arab ministers of information recently declared, new forms of media can become a kind of 'offshore democracy' in the Arab World (as quoted in Sakr, 2001: 150). Citizens' rights were included as a proxy for democratization, given the context of overall Israeli occupation.
3. Thirdly, some of the themes represent significant gaps in current research. Prominent Palestinian scholar Thawabteh (2010), in *Palestinian Media Map: Production Congestion and Consumption Dispersion*, suggests that specific issues, including the politics of resistance, need to be better understood in relation to production and content of Palestinian media. This theme has therefore also been included.

Chapter 3 will present the methodology in more detail, but it is already important to explain that these themes for content analysis were selected through a ‘grounded’ process of first watching all episodes several times. The themes were then selected as they appeared, and some were retained as significant, while others were not. Some themes that did not appear were also retained. All the themes were then discussed with field supervisors in Gaza. To capture the most significant content, each key theme was coded separately by watching the episodes again, and categorised in wider summative codes, in a slow but methodical process designed to help answer the main research questions (Miles and Huberman, 1994:56). This was done using a standard form designed to enter thematic data for content analysis (see Appendix 1).

Looking at different episodes, and looking closely at the narratives, text and image content was central to the content analysis. The approach adopted was to conceptualise ‘factionalism’ in a post-conflict situation as being largely about shifting content and media practices. It is worth noting that earlier research on factionalism in the printed press – also using coding of content – found that only the relatively ‘independent’ Palestinian newspaper *Al Quds* did not make use of religious or factional forms of expression and narratives in its news reporting (Jamal, 2000).

1.7 Fieldwork amidst Dissonance: practical and ethical considerations

This study is neither intended to delegitimise any of the parties researched, nor to discredit their motives. Rather, the study suggests that both sets of media producers may be only partially aware of the outcomes of ‘their’ media representations, as expressed in programme content and production decisions. As Hall (1997) stated, such ideologies are not always consciously formulated, but mostly unconsciously. To collect evidence, I engaged in an extended period of field research that has allowed me to combine a strategy of content analysis with semi-structured interviews with TV producers and other production and media personnel (for their names and positions, see Appendix 7).

Each media channel will have its specific political culture or media culture as well as its own organisational culture. However, all of this is distinct from what is called ‘culture’ in cultural studies or anthropology. Culture can broadly be defined as what a researcher ‘has found and could

attribute successfully to the members of that society in the context of his [or her] dealing with them' (Goodenough, 1976: 5). However, factionalism is not so much about culture, as about politics. The primary principle of a factionalised media is political, not cultural, and this means that in factional media, political considerations tend to have a strong impact on programme content than cultural influences.

However, since ideology does not entirely shape the content of programmes, the experience of being a 'scholar-practitioner', conducting in-depth interviews in a context where the researcher had worked for some time, helped make 'the familiar strange,' reinforcing a sense of rediscovery and of exploration during fieldwork (Erikson, 1984:62). Going further, in-depth interviewing helped to make 'the obvious' 'even more clear' as well (Spindler, 1982:15). As some researchers suggest, such in-depth interviewing, in a context with which the researcher is familiar, can be used to: 'deepen and sharpen our understanding of the complexities of conflict-ridden societies', including our own. Thus, for instance:

In-depth interviews can be conducted with rebels in a remote jungle to understand their reasons to fight, with political leaders in a post-conflict country to explore how they perceive international peace building initiatives ... the research method of in-depth interviewing is used to learn of individual perspectives on one or a few narrowly defined themes. The questions used to guide the interview are often semi-structured, i.e., the researcher has formulated a set of questions that all interviewees will be asked (Brounéus, 2011: 130).

The aim of such interviews has been to complement the quantitative dimension of content analysis. In addition, documents from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and the Ministry of Culture in the Palestinian territories have been useful sources for background information. To strengthen understanding of producers' decisions, the semi-structured interviews were conducted during fieldwork; both in Gaza and, by using Skype, in West Bank. The interviews revealed how each satellite TV channel's producers chose to deliver an interpretation of the world that emphasised the importance of their allied factional political actors in shaping reality on the ground. Such interviews revealed how factional media operated, as a means of power; and the interviews also revealed how producers sought to resist the temptations of

factionalism, by making decisions about programme themes that had goals beyond the support for one's own faction.

The focus of semi-structured interviews was on the interactions between producers and programme creators, on the criteria used for reviewing materials before airing them, and on the intervention of political and religious authorities in the *processes* of media production and their eventual airing on satellite TV. The views of the media production crew were essential for the research, as they provided a more contextualised understanding of processes of production in relation to the analysed content. There were two journalists who only agreed to be interviewed under condition of strict anonymity. To honour this agreement, both were referred to as Interview: journalist, where their views were cited. Given the sensitivity of their straightforward answers, I was grateful to both of them for agreeing to talk, and also of course to all those who agreed to being cited in this study.

It might appear that for a Palestinian journalist it should be quite straightforward to conduct this kind of research on the Palestinian media. Being a practicing journalist, and a scholar-practitioner, the researcher is indeed in the unusually fortunate position of having a 'reflexive' approach to the subject matter of this thesis (Pink, 2015; Mayer, Banks and Caldwell, 2009: 10). However the research process was also hampered by the researcher's insider status, as far as mobility and access to the West Bank was concerned. As is more fully analysed in Chapter 3, the research process had its own dynamics and complications that represent the downside of the researcher's 'insider' status in Gaza. Some 'insider experiential knowledge' may well have helped the researcher obtain material and interviews that would have proven impossible for others to identify, or find. This will help ensure that the study contributes original scholarship around how programmes are produced, and what can be known about this process.

The aim has been to contribute to new knowledge and to engage in on-going debates about media practices during 'cold conflicts' generally, and in Palestine specifically. This aim follows on from the recommendation of D'Acci (2004) to focus on specific 'socio-historical sites' in media work. During the selected period of 10 months, between March 2009 and January 2010, media content and production conditions were formed by dominant social practices at the time. Therefore, analysis

of context and content are both essential to help appreciate how, during that ten-month period, selected programme content came about and what its meaning was in relation to factions, factionalism and moving beyond them.

The semi-structured interviews centred on the production processes involved in making the four selected TV programmes, and this allowed the respondents the freedom to expand their answers and express what is not always visible from analysing media content, especially choices made behind the scenes and the reasons some choices were *not* made (Wiethoff, & Gehring. 2012). As several scholars have argued, content analysis on its own is not a sufficient method for understanding how a kind of media is produced, or the implications of different kinds of content (Morgan 1993). This is why it is important that staff and media producers add the deeper context of what they have produced and why. This contextualises the understanding that emerges of how events and PSC and ASC programming are shaped.

Selected for their flexibility, semi-structured interviews were expected to yield a better understanding of the content and modes of production in cultural and children's TV programming than a more structured or survey-type set of questions. Interviews were face-to-face, relatively informal in some cases, and were often conducted while also observing the production process of the TV programmes. The aim was not only to extract information, but also to grasp the dynamics of the social realities operating inside media institutions like ASC and PSC. The research has taken into consideration the growing voices within media studies and social sciences, calling for greater balance and synthesis among various qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches, which are no longer seen as alternatives, but as complementary (Clark, 2006).

As Clark puts it, carrying out fieldwork in the Middle East requires the researcher to contend with 'political authoritarianism and violence, anti-Americanism... deep cultural differences related to religion and, as a result, gender' (Clark, 2006: 417). Setting up interviews with producers of factional media has proven to be a challenging task, not only because of some producers' unwillingness to participate, but also because both TV outlets experience different dilemmas that they expressed from the moment of first contacts about this research.

Within PSC, producers were understandably careful about making comments and statements that related in any way to how the PSC is

funded or the role of donors. As a matter of priority, they wanted to ensure the research findings would not upset any of their donors. However, for the ASC, the questions revolved instead around the background of the researcher, and what kind of specific questions the researcher would want to ask. ASC producers did not want to contribute to any type of research that could be used to delegitimise the Hamas-oriented media or its programmes.

Given these reservations expressed by interviewees, the researcher finds it appropriate to discuss some dilemmas involved in the interviewing process. Trust is influenced by how interviewees perceived themselves and the researcher, in terms of seniority, collegiality and shared professional and perhaps political values. The process of interviewing involved a delicate balance between maintaining these forms of trust, overcoming distrust, and obtaining critical insights by probing further and asking more from the interviewees than they might have intended to disclose. Media producers in Gaza and West Bank resembled ‘closely guarded communities’, as identified in one study (Mayer, Banks and Caldwell, 2009). In another context, it was similarly noted that a significant concern during fieldwork is: ‘Addressing practical issues of gaining access to closely guarded communities; the impact of professional identities on types of disclosure in the field; and the “trade-offs” between research and work’ (Mayer, Banks and Caldwell, 2009: 10).

Face-to-face interviews were mostly held during 1-2 hours sittings, often within the production site for ASC – for *Pioneers of Tomorrow* and *Burning Brands*, or over the telephone with the PSC producers of *Sesame Street* and *Cultural Flashes*. On two occasions, the researcher had to return for a follow-up interview to address questions that needed a bit of clarification or to draw out more information from producers about the content analysis carried out during the course of the same year. The researcher interviewed the head of the ASC Board of ASC, Dr. Al Bardawil, and Mr. Al Shafi, head of PSC programming, who were proven to be willing to assist by ‘snowballing’ (Berg, 2004, 36), identifying others who would be the right people for the researcher to interview. The researcher was referred to Al Bardawil and Al Shafi by on-the-ground producers who preferred all research questions to be dealt with at a more senior management level. The 26 open-ended questions posed to those interviewed are listed in Appendix 2.

One of the interviewees found some of the questions uncomfortable, highlighting why it is appropriate to make a note of this and discuss why and how rapport and trust must first be built if uncomfortable topics are to be addressed. The researcher tried to avoid leading questions in the first round of interviews – however, after screening and content analysis, he tried to establish a deeper understanding of why the programmes appeared as they did, where less factional content was obvious. In addition, the researcher had to listen to his interviewees without objecting to their views, so as not to risk ‘...the curtailment of the interview or the self-censorship of the interviewee’ (Clark, 2006: 420).

1.7.1 Interviews at the PSC

Unlike with the ASC, setting up interviews with PSC producers and staff proved difficult, for various reasons, mostly logistical and the effects of occupation. Upon return to the field, the researcher found that the PSC no longer had an office in Gaza. Travel restrictions and denial of travel documents to permit access to the West Bank by the Israeli authorities, meant the researcher could not travel to the West Bank. The only other option was to rely on phone calls and e-mails. The researcher’s request to Mr Riad Hassan, an aide of President Abbas, for access to programme materials and for introductions to PSC staff, took a full year to be handled, and was only finally resolved when a diplomat travelled to Gaza.

Only after a written appeal to President Abbas, did Mr Ahmed Al-Hazzouri, head of PSC, give permission for his staff members to take part in interviews for this study. The response came after encouragement from Dr Nabeel Khateeb whom the researcher met at a Geneva media conference and who, as a minister, believed in the relevance of this study. Among those interviewed were some internal PSC staff members, and some ancillary staff involved in programme production. Below, each one of my interviewees in Gaza and West Bank is briefly introduced.

Saleh Shafi (PSC Senior official). The researcher had not been familiar with the work of Mr Shafi, and vice versa. Mr Shafi, a Fatah nationalist, met with the researcher twice in his PSC Gaza office - a relatively new location. Mr Shafi was a PhD candidate, which provided a common base from which to build rapport and trust. He understood, from face-to-face discussion, the role of a researcher asking questions, including those which might have seemed difficult or unanswerable. Mr Shafi showed

flexibility and allowed this researcher to talk to all the people involved in production, and to watch sections of some episodes. In the second interview, when he was confronted with the result of content analysis, he accepted the findings, and found some results surprising, including the lack of explicit religious content, something discussed further in Chapters 6 and 7. It is doubtful Mr Shafi was free to say all he wanted, and despite his senior position, he was cautious when being interviewed. He understood that, under the *de facto* authority, he could be held responsible for any statement he made.

Mr Imad Al Asfar (Head of Programming Unit, PSC). The researcher was not able to meet with Mr Al Asfar face-to-face, but he seemed an open-minded, intellectual type of person. We communicated via telephone, but Mr Al Asfar preferred to answer my questions via e-mail. As self-critical of Fatah and PA, he proved – throughout the questions – his willingness to engage in a serious academic interview. However, on some occasions, and unlike Mr Shafi, he expressed his bias against Islamist thinking in general. The researcher then had to express neither agreement, nor disagreement. This helped Mr Al Asfar to open up more and facilitated the building of rapport and trust. I made sincere efforts to show him that I would do my best to simply listen and keep an open mind.

Mrs Layla Sayeigh (Head of Sesame Street workshop). Establishing contact with Mrs Sayeigh proved extremely difficult, as she is external to the PSC setting. Mrs Sayeigh expressed how busy she was, and the researcher tried several ways to get in touch. After several months, contact was made with Mrs Sayeigh, via her daughter, with the help of colleagues at Columbia University. From this point onwards, Mrs Sayeigh proved she wanted to engage in the interview process, even though when I did send her questions, she left some unanswered. Next, I called to request a 90-minute interview via telephone, which happened some months later. During the interview, Mrs Sayeigh refused to show any real identity in depth – but dealt with all questions, except those concerning budgets and how finances were allocated and distributed. Mrs Sayeigh recommended the researcher should ask her financial officer for answers to these particular questions.

Mr Mohammed Abu Shammalah (Sound Man, formerly for Cultural Flashes). The researcher noticed a gap in the flow of information

from Cultural Flashes, since none of those involved in this programme in the past worked for the PSC any more by the time the interviews were being arranged. However, Abu Shammalah – not a top producer but a soundman involved in on-the-ground production of Cultural Flashes – was one staff member who could still contribute in a face-to-face interview. The information he provided was mainly concerned with the psychosocial context and the production process, and dealt with the Gaza *de facto* authority, from the perspective of someone working for PSC. As an outsourced staff member, he showed more flexibility in engaging in honest discussion, and was not strongly affiliated with Fatah. Mr Abu Shammalah seemed to have appreciated the researcher's invitation to participate, as an expert involved with the show. The value of speaking to those who are involved directly in the production process, and not only to managers, has been stressed by in other studies (Mayer, 2011; Mayer, 2009).

1.7.2 Interviews at the ASC

Getting interviews and materials was relatively easier in the case of ASC than in PSC. This was for several reasons. Firstly, the researcher could meet ASC staff face-to-face and thus found it much easier to make arrangements. Also, the researcher had existing contacts with several Hamas-affiliated journalists, and was able to lobby for interviews through them. Establishing rapport was also relatively easier, given the immediate presence of the person interviewed in the room, with the researcher, and our common backgrounds in Gaza. Generally the interviews conducted in Gaza went well, with the field supervisor, Dr Ahmed Al-Turk, facilitating a couple of interviews by advocating among satellite TV professionals that I was someone critical to talk to. He also stressed that I did not seek to create problems or take up too much of the interviewees' time. This helped to open doors in cases where producers might otherwise have been reluctant to see me.

Dr Salah Al-Bardawil (Head of the Board of the ASC). Dr Al-Bardawil was interviewed twice in his capacity as head of the ASC Board. He holds the highest authority in ASC and seemed to view the researcher as someone who needed in-depth answers and explanations of events. Dr Al-Bardawil is a top leader of Hamas and a lawmaker, elected in the 2006 elections, who previously worked as a university Professor of Arabic Literature in Gaza, and he often appears on TV. Trust was built

by openly explaining the purpose of the doctoral research, and explaining that there was no intention of undermining or delegitimizing either the PSC or the ASC. Dr Al-Bardawil also acts as a spokesman for the Hamas parliamentary group, and met with the researcher in the Hamas spokesman office, where he works. Despite a couple of interruptions by reporters coming in for quick interviews – for which Dr Al Bardawil apologised graciously – he was generous in allowing time for the two interviews. The second interview was to request answers on the basis of the outcome of content analysis, conducted by the researcher. Dr Al Bardawil had requested the operational definitions of selected themes and then agreed to comment on the second set of questions related to why some percentages were high, and others low or moderate. This proved a very useful follow-up interview.

Mr Samer Abu Mohsen (Head of the ASC's Programming Department). As a senior ASC staff member, Mr Abu Mohsen's trust was based on his being a neighbour of the researcher. We often saw one another in the nearby mosque at prayer time. Mr Abu Mohsen provided time for the interview, and also facilitated the researcher's access to archives and other written materials. Known for his moderate position within Hamas, he is also very active in his media role, and brings journalists together regardless of political affiliation. He was aware of the researcher's involvement as a journalist, but the relationship of trust was based not so much on collegiality as on neighbourliness. The interview occurred at the ASC's headquarters and was pleasantly relaxed and also informative.

Mr Younies Abu Jarad (Presenter/producer *Burning Brands*). In addition to being both a presenter and a producer for *Burning Brands*, Mr Abu Jarad is also a poet and an ambitious TV personality, who often appears to be modeling Palestinian TV in the same style as Al Jazeera. Mr Abu Jarad is a proud affiliate of the Islamic Movement and dedicated to the study of history, having obtained his MA in Modern History. Following a short meeting over coffee, at the ASC headquarters, Abu Jarad suggested we conduct the interview at the Palestinian Writers Union, where he an active member. Initially, the interviewee was tense and reluctant to engage with some of the questions asked, concerning the lack of women's participation in the ASC programmes, for instance. However, he remained calm until at some point the interview was

interrupted by a phone call, and after this, he appeared to become less trusting, and even stated that some of my questions sounded ‘intelligence-oriented’. I reassured him this was not the case, but even so, this proved a difficult interview, and quite tense. Abu Jarad refused to deal with one of the questions, which asked about ‘compromises’ made in terms of content for the sake of reducing factionalism. In the end, he suggested that ‘compromises’ was the wrong word, and suggested using the word ‘sacrifices’ instead.

Mr Ayman Al Amriti (Producer of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*). By interviewing Al Amriti, in his capacity as producer of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, I was able to discuss and examine what could be viewed as a controversial show. The researcher knew the producer, only recently, in his capacity as member of the production team. The interview took place at Al Amriti’s private production company, which was less pressured than at the ASC headquarters, given his busy schedule there. On one occasion, he had to end the interview, postponing it to the next day, due to an emergency. Mr Al Amriti engaged in all forms of questions and seemed to have a special interest in how production takes place, not just in ASC, but across the whole Arab region. He acknowledged that having been raised in the environment of the mosque had shaped his personality, but also that his studies in Fine Arts had made him take production and décor seriously when producing a programme.

Producers were contacted prior to, as well as after, the viewing of episodes of specific programmes, and their remarks, placed alongside the results of content analysis, helped to make sense of what was emerging from the content analysis. The heads of programming of both television stations were approached for discussion on the initial findings. On some occasions, to cross-check analysis done, a board member was approached for a post-analysis discussion to verify and clarify the remaining material.

Through these interviews, and other, informal talks, I drew on experiential knowledge, and a network of contacts, especially in Gaza. I introduced myself as an independent researcher, who had worked for international media outlets, and not been closely associated previously with either of the two main ‘factions’ whose media he was now researching. In the field research, I made an effort to provide clear and,

where possible, prior information on the objectives and expected outputs of interviews with producers, officials and scriptwriters of both TV stations.

However, the most challenging part of the whole research process, both for PSC and ASC programmes, was the actual copying of programme content. This took many months, since it involved acquiring video tapes, copying them, and then exchanging them for new ones. This proved the greatest obstacle to obtaining data, since without securing archived (data) materials from the actual programmes of the PSC and ASC, content analysis could not take place. Neither of the two TV stations seemed to expect anyone to conduct 'independent research' on the actual content of children's and cultural programmes. The archives of recordings of the programmes from the research period, proved very difficult to locate and even harder to access them and gain permission to copy the material.

In a complex process one researcher had described (Figenschou, 2010), I was gradually able to identify a group of 'media elites' who were acting as gatekeepers in the media and who held key positions within Fatah and Hamas, controlling access to 'factional' media outputs. This situation is not unusual or new in the Middle East, as Palestinian elites across Palestine have managed to 'influence and shape the media, including regional satellite channels' for many decades (Figenschou, 2010:695). However, the result was that 'editorial content is ultimately attributable not to people outside the elite but to political agendas that reflect patterns of elite ownership and control' (Sakr, 2007:6). Such elites can also control who gets to do what research, and can have access to which material.

Techniques for accessing data and interviewees have been discussed continuously in the literature on media elite groups, as they are often difficult to penetrate. As argued by Figenschou (2010) for the Middle Eastern context more generally, there is a lack of critical and independent research institutes, and little understanding of what kinds of methodologies researchers use to analyse production and media content. In the Palestinian context, most universities remain under the direct or indirect control of political groups. Critical researchers can be suspected of working for and promoting foreign interests, and this also helps explain a serious shortage of academic publications and journals on

media communications in the region (Figenschou, 2010; Ayish, 2008a). The lack of first-rate, critical academic media programmes at universities in the region has also been noted (Zayani and Sahraoui, 2007: 162).

Due to especially difficult access and movement, imposed by the Israeli blockade on Gaza, it has already been explained that the researcher was obliged to conduct many interviews for this research via telephone, or to ask questions and obtain responses through e-mail. It took an appeal to the Palestinian president himself, as mentioned before, before archival materials were released, after a permit was issued by the PSC for this purpose.⁴ Such measures were not needed to conduct interviews, but in Palestine in particular, 'studies of production inevitably involve and animate complex, and sometimes problematic, relations between researchers and their human subjects' (Mayer, Banks and Caldwell, 2009: 5), even where the researcher would be regarded as an insider in relation to the Palestinian setting. Furthermore, my position as a professional journalist working mainly in Gaza as a 'scholar-practitioner' implied that I had to negotiate my interviews and other contacts very cautiously, including inside Gaza (Mayer, 2009).

When, after more than six months of high-level requests, it became apparent that travel to West Bank would simply not be permitted, another strategy had to be devised. Neither PSC nor ASC showed much enthusiasm about the study being conducted, perhaps fearing that the research would reflect critically on their programme output and production processes. Given the importance of the political economy of media production, it was not surprising that producers were mostly unwilling to release valuable information with regard to finances and the costs of episodes of the various programmes. In this reluctance, the researcher recognised Arab media officials resorting to 'bureaucracy' to avoid divulging important but sensitive information (Figenschou, 2010: 971). The researcher was able to obtain some of this kind of financial information from secondary sources, and later could verify a few details in interviews and discussions with the heads of the two TV stations, but most details were not available. Those statistics that are available provide estimates that vary considerably. Some were, however, confirmed as accurate by all parties involved.

Sometimes the producers asked about the research methodology. This happened, for example, when the head of the Board of ASC, Al Bardawil, questioned some of the operational definitions of themes (see

Appendix 3) as used for content analysis. He queried why the themes of religious values, for which frequencies of appearance were low for both ASC programmes, were defined as they were. This result was quite shocking to him. Where relevant, the operational definitions were shared with him and with other interviewees, to ensure proper responses from the production and editorial teams of both PSC and ASC programmes.

Every producer of cultural and children's TV programmes has his or her personal vision of how things are organised in the TV station where they work or which they are affiliated with. These personal versions have been called 'propriospects' of cultural knowledge by one author (Goodenough, 1981: 111). They are important and should not be overlooked. I have tried to ensure sufficient space in the text of this study to ensure that these visions of the interviewees are able to be expressed and are integrated into the analysis.

1.8 Outline of Chapters

Following this Introduction to the research topic as a whole, Chapter 2 traces the historical foundations of the Palestinian media's configuration today. Although the roots of Palestinian media can be traced to the late years of the Ottoman Empire, Chapter 2 starts with the years of the British Mandate, and focuses especially on the period since the 1948 *Nakba* (or Disaster), critical for the emergence of a distinctly Palestinian national – but also in some ways factional – media. When Palestinians became displaced *en masse*, as discussed in Chapter 2, there gradually emerged, within the printed press, a form of media that tended to be politically and personally 'factional' in orientation and structure. This tended to undermine strong emerging notions of shared Palestinian identity, expressed in anti-colonial and anti-occupation nationalism that aimed to bring all people and territories of 'Palestine' together.

Chapter 3 provides the reader with the necessary explanations of how theoretical and methodological considerations mesh, and describes the key conceptual tools that made close analysis of satellite TV content and production possible, the main data of this study. Chapter 4 traces various elements that compose the background to the working environment of the media in Palestine, looking at the various constraints imposed on media producers as a result of Israeli occupation, among other factors.

Chapter 5 discusses ASC's and PSC's cultural and children's production and programming, tracing the background and vision of each of the two TV outlets first of all, and examining the structure of the four programmes compared in this study. Some initial comparisons in content between them are outlined, with a few examples. The chapter concludes by addressing one of the research questions, on the role that journalists play in children's and cultural TV programming.

In Chapters 6 and 7, the central questions are explored further by looking at potential links between production and content through a 'circuits of media' approach. These two chapters are mainly a dense description of the occurrence of selected themes in all episodes of the ASC's and PSC's children's and cultural programmes, with each theme dealt with in turn. Chapter 6 first considers content themes and production values as they appear in children's programmes on ASC and PSC. Chapter 7 then deals with both content themes and production values for PSC. These two chapters follow D'Acci's (2004) framework for understanding the critical circuits of media production processes. The different themes presented in these two chapters are each fully discussed with reference to specific and identified episodes in which they either appear often, appear a little, or do not appear at all. The question of why content appeared in this way is central to these two chapters, and Chapter 7 concludes by applying the model of Gitlin (1980) and Gans (1979) to examine the influence of key individuals and specific organisational routines on content. Chapter 8 then offers key findings on the defactionalising of media content and emergent forms of 'Palestinianism' in media production and content.

From a general understanding of history, context and shape of the two media outlets, followed by content analysis and closer examination of the production process, we arrive at a better understanding of how producers in Palestinian satellite TV may be trying to move beyond 'factionalism' in both children's and cultural programs. We note in Chapter 8, the re-emergence of 'Palestinianism' in this study. In Chapter 8, this is discussed in more detail, along with some insights drawn from the study as a whole, especially in relation to the role of technology, the role of 'domestic', regional and international competition and the role of women's voices and minorities. Chapter 9 is the Conclusion, and returns to the overall findings, including a few recommendations on how to move forward for the media in Palestine, through a formal code of

conduct. This last chapter links specific cases in this study to the wider field of media research in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Notes

¹ Farfur is the ASC's Mickey Mouse character who was killed in the final episode of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*.

² Please note that all interviews are provided in this format: Name, year. Full details of the location and date of interviews and of the role of the interviewee, are provided in a later section of this chapter.

³ These factors were selected following in-depth discussion with the field supervisors, Professor Khader Khader and Professor Ahmed al Turk, both of the Islamic University in Gaza. After that, external assessors, including Professor Nafeed Barakat, were asked to check their relevance. There was considerable debate about how to identify and select themes that could best reveal 'factional' and 'non-factional' or 'defactionalised' content.

⁴ After weeks of negotiations with the ASC's Board of Directors, the researcher got access to the data – some extra months were needed to secure materials from the PSC in Ramallah, partially because the researcher had not been given a permit by Israel to conduct the research – despite interventions by the Netherlands authorities. Yet, the materials were handed over after contracting a company to copy materials on behalf of the researcher. The process involved contact with the aide of President Mahmoud Abbas and other ministers. In regular situations, such materials would be available online, but because of the conflict, material that is aired is never kept for later use – as if both the PSC and ASC do not want to refer back to these periods once a national unity deal is signed. See Clark (2006) for some of the difficulties of fieldwork in sensitive environments.

2

A Short History of Media in Palestine: Perceptions and Perspectives

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the media is presented as a key vehicle of expression of an emergent sense of distinctive Palestinian national identity. In line with Benedict Anderson (2006: 34-39), the media can be seen as one of the key tools for constructing an ‘imagined community’ of Palestine and Palestinians. The chapter starts with the suggestion of Anderson that nationalism starts to take modern forms with the appearance of print media in the national language (Anderson, 2006). This chapter explores, roughly chronologically, and by type of media, the connection between a sense of emerging Palestinian identity and the structure and content of media outlets. The chapter covers the emergence of media in Palestine through three key phases: (i) the British Mandate, following the collapse of the Ottoman Sultanate; (ii) the Israeli occupation, settlement and expulsion of Palestinians from their land from 1948 onwards; (iii) the two intifadas, Israeli wars and inter-factional fighting of recent years. What this chapter will show is how media has successively reinforced both national imaginaries of Palestine and the sense that Palestinians are subject to factional forces and influences, which divide them.

Through a broad historical narrative, based on archival work in local repositories, the chapter explores potential meanings of the term factionalism, relating it to notions of partisanship, clannishness, elite influences and, eventually, to nationalism. Media has been factionalised to the extent that print or other media express sectarian, political and factional divisions in society, especially in relation to inter-elite rivalries (Quneis, 2011). However, national imaginaries have tended to resurface during critical periods, and are never entirely absent, being expressed alongside narrower, more factional forms of expression and

identification in the printed press. Technologies of media start with the earliest printing presses right up to contemporary satellite media and social media, and new forms are still emerging in the present. However we start with the British mandate and end some time in the 1990s.

2.2 Background: Media under the British Mandate (1920-1948)

During the first two years of World War I (1914 to 1916), the Ottoman state stood against the French and British, and was eventually defeated in the middle of the war. The Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 divided up the territories of the former Ottoman Empire between the two new imperial powers. In claiming victory, the British and French were also acquiring the wealth and possessions of the old order, and one of these possessions was Palestine. The Balfour Declaration proclaimed the establishment of a new national home for the Jewish people in Palestine (Schneer, 2010). After four centuries of Ottoman rule, the British Mandate that originated in the Balfour Declaration of 1917, started in 1920 and was to last almost thirty years.¹

The Constitution that governed the press during the Ottoman Empire had remained in force throughout the British Mandate period (Jarrar, 2009). During World War I, no newspapers were produced in Palestine (Najjar, 2005; Bin Yousef, 1987). Right after the end of the war, some 18 new Palestinian newspapers appeared, including two Jewish newspapers and one British government paper. The printed press in Palestine once more started to be distributed throughout the region (Abu Hasheesh, 2005; Al-Sherif, 1979). From the 1920s onward, telegraphs transmitted news in record time from around the globe to newspaper headquarters in Jerusalem (Hanainia, 2008). The revolution this produced in the print media can perhaps be likened to the impact of information technology on the media in recent years.

During the British Mandate era, development of a distinctly Palestinian media went hand in hand with establishment of a nationalist political movement. Already in the 1920s, Palestinians, despite their diversity, were starting to think of themselves as one people, with a common national identity and shared history (Khalidi, 2006; Anderson, 2006). This trend would intensify with the end of the British Mandate and the establishment of the state of Israel on Palestinian land.

Simply stated, the early Palestinian nationalist movement emerged under the British Mandate, feeding on Arabs' feelings of betrayal as a result of the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 and Balfour Declaration of 1917. Both documents contained conflicting promises to local Arab populations, Palestinians, and new Jewish settlers (Pappé, 2006). In the 1930s, with the rise of the Nazi party in Germany, what had been gradual Jewish emigration into Palestine intensified, and Britain became more accommodating of Zionist movements than Ottomans had been.

At first, after the First World War, an emergent sense of common identity among Palestinians, Arabs and Jews started to emerge in the press in Palestine. Later, however, new political realities led Palestinian Arab media in Palestine to openly oppose further Jewish immigration into the region. For example, more voices emerged warning that such immigration was intended to grab the land of those who had lived there for generations, especially the Arabs. Earlier, under the Ottomans, one author, writing under the pen name of "M" in *Al-Quds* (August 3, 1908) had welcomed Jewish immigration, stating: "They came to Palestine to build and develop it and live with its people, and therefore we have to live with them as brothers" (Hanaina, 2008: 125). The Balfour Declaration's promise to establish a national homeland for Jews changed this vision, and was therefore rejected by the Palestinian press on behalf of non-Jewish populations in Palestine. The polarisation of the press over the issue of Jewish settlement during the inter-war years has led some academic historians to refer to this as a period of 'factional journalism' in Palestine (Abu Shanab, 2001:21; Bin Yousef, 1987:18).

At the start of the British Mandate, overall the media in Palestine started to become markedly politicised, with almost 50 new publications (48) appearing, including 8 political journals, 13 art magazines, 5 economic publications and a number of religious and humour publications (Najjar, 2005, Al Gharib, 1978). Cultural expression flourished alongside political newspapers and journals, with the arts and literature being explored through short stories, novels and poetry, all of this playing a significant part in the expansion of media during this period, especially among Palestinian Arabs (Khoury, 1976).² One of these literary magazines was *Zabret Al Jameel* (The Beautiful Rose), founded in 1921 by Jameel Al Bahri in Jaffa. Its name was shortened a year later to *Al Zabira* (The Blossom) (Yaghi, 1980). Following a political dispute, however, Al Bahri was assassinated shortly afterwards.

With the establishment of the Communist Party in Palestine in 1919, new newspapers emerged that sought to defend workers' rights. There were 13 printing presses in Palestine, and the early twenties witnessed even more openly political newspapers appearing, including *Lisan Al Arab* (The Tongue of Arabs), started in 1921 in Jerusalem by Ibrahim Salim Al Najjar and Ahmed Izzat Al Adami, two Lebanese journalists. This publication supported a British policy based on 'even-handedness' towards Jews and Arabs living in Palestine. In 1923, several more newspapers were founded, including *Al Heqooq* (The Rights) by Fahmi Al Hussaini (Suliman, 1987). More significantly, in 1924, when seven more newspapers entered the printed press, some major factional newspapers appeared, including *Al Jami'aa Al Arabya* (The Arabic Federation) under Munief Al Hussini, a supporter of Federalism, *Sawt Al Haq* (Voice of Truth) and a Palestinian Communist party newspaper, *Ila al Amam* (Forward). In 1925, Sheikh Abdullah Al Qalqali started a new publication *Serat-ul-Mostaqem* (The Straight Path) and also revived the *Filistin* newspaper, originally started in 1911 during Ottoman rule (Matar, 2010).

Most historians place the rise of the Palestinian National Movement to these few crucial years, from 1923 to 1939. During this period, as Britain's strategic objectives and the Zionists' intentions became more obvious, there was a turning point for local media and for the National Movement. Awareness of widespread opposition to turning Palestine into a national home for Jewish people started to produce marked divisions in the printed press in terms of their agendas and arguments. Some newspapers, like *Filistin*, published anti-British Mandate views while other publications, such as *Lisan Al Arab*, looked to the British to protect the Arab populations from Jewish settlers' expansionist, state-building ambitions (Najjar, 2005; Mahafza, 1989; Bin Yousef, 1987). The growth of the printed press at this time played an important part in providing expression for those who were becoming part of the National Movement (Khalidi, 2006). As competition for leadership of the emerging movement deepened among political elites, more newspapers representing various political interests and speaking to their own supporters began to emerge (Najjar, 2005). *Al Jami'aa Al Arabya*, for example, represented the Arabic Palestinian Party. The famous *Filistin* newspaper was owned by a Greek orthodox who advocated pan-Arabism and supported the Al Defa'a party (Defense Party) founded by

Ragheb Al Nashashibi (Abu Hasheesh, 2005). These competing interests did not really develop into full factional journalism until later, with the Nakbah of 1948. In the 1920s and 1930, a few newspapers like *Al Yarmouk* (1924), *Al Jazeera* (1924) and *Al Etyhad Al Arabi* (Arab Union) remained independent and were not governed by the more factional agendas that appeared in other papers and magazines (Yohsa'a, 1974).

Despite growing opposition to plans for mass Jewish settlement, there was political stagnation during the inter-war years and this resulted from the in-fighting between two major Jerusalemite families, the Al Hussainis and the Al Nashashibis. These two rival clans were perpetually locked in rivalry around leadership of the National Movement at this time (Najjar, 2005). The factionalism that arose was pilloried with great sarcasm by Mustapha Al Ghalaini who in 1924 published a poem warning the public not to follow their leaders into such in-fighting. The poem included the following lines: '...They [the public] think leadership is a dome built on a foundation of gold... [which] they glorified. But glory itself refuses to be violated' (*Al Zabru* magazine, 1924).³

Clashes over leadership among elites at this time foreclosed the possibility that some other potentially important actors and individuals would lead the National Movement later. One notable example is the Al Khalidi family, considered among the oldest and most educated in Jerusalem, and known for making its collection of historical documents available to the Palestinian and wider public (Al Sharif, 2011). Factional conflicts started to influence the Palestinian political and nationalist movements in the later inter-war years, and continue today. This shows that today's factionalism in the media can sometimes have deep roots.

2.3 Factions without Factionalism

Between 1930 and 1935, the rapid growth of the Palestinian media was shaped by new developments in printing, in information gathering, and in knowledge acquired from the experience of the print media of other countries and the emergence of Palestinian political factions (between 1932 and 1935). By 1935, there were six distinct Palestinian political factions, and soon they would be joined by many more. During this period, each political faction favoured their own particular newspapers, which were used as platforms from which to advocate for their own factional agendas, promote their own policies, oppose British policies in

their own way, and recruit new members. This pattern, established in the 1930s, would set a trend for the next few years of factional fervour (Al Sharif, 2011; Al Hout, 1986). Although the British authorities made it difficult for journalists to work, another 43 new newspapers were established between 1930 and 1939 (Najjar, 2005), including 17 political newspapers, 9 cultural publications, 8 religious journals, 2 scout publications, 1 economic magazine, 4 education and science newspapers, and 1 industry magazine.

The print media in the British Palestine mandate became daily as well as weekly and monthly, with 8 of 17 political newspapers being published daily. As in 1908-1909 under the Ottomans, the late 1930s were marked by a pre-war flourishing of the press. This period, from 1932 to 1935, is still widely regarded today as one of the highpoints of literary output in the history of Palestinian media and publishing (Al Sharif, 2011; Najjar, 2005; Bin Yousef, 1987). A growing critical mass of publications meant that more and more diverse political voices were able to find expression. Although political parties were able to express their political views through their newspapers and other publications, so were other sections of the public, including women and minorities. Although each party had its own outlets, during this period of flourishing debate, this did not result in the marked factionalism noted in the earlier years of British rule.

Instead, the mid-1930s can be characterised as a period of ‘factions without factionalism,’ in media terms. As early forms of nationalist identity started to emerge, early notions of Palestinianism were slowly emerging. Historically speaking, the roots of what Dina Matar terms ‘proto-nationalism,’ were emerging at this time. In her book *What it Means to be Palestinian*, Matar quotes Yezid Sayigh that: ‘the experience of being socially and politically marginalised effectively transformed Palestinianism from a popular, grassroots patriotism, into proto-nationalism’ (Matar, 2010: 56). As intense confrontations with the British authorities increased, and in the years 1936-1939 this revolt gained strength. Zionism was increasingly geared towards seizing huge areas of land for rapidly growing numbers of Jewish settlers coming into Palestine, and as this happened, discontent had grown among Arab and Christian Palestinians in particular, from the late 1920s onward. The

Filistin newspaper of August 30 1930, quoted one outraged farmer who stated:⁴

'I sell my land and properties because the government is forcing me to pay taxes... in a time that I don't have the necessary tools to support myself and my family. Under these conditions, I am forced to take loans with 5% interest due after one or two months. This [i.e., not being able to repay the debt in so short a time] forces me to renew my debt over and over again, adding more cost on the original debt. This condition will force me, in the end, to sell my land in order to repay some of the debt.'

Media coverage of Zionist land appropriation increased the spread of anger among Palestinians. On 23 March 1930, the *Filistin* published an editorial, after Lord Balfour died on March 19, which said: 'Balfour died, and his declaration should die with him.' *The Arab Federation* newspaper wrote on 13 August 1930: 'Oh Palestinians, kick out this Zionism with your feet, and stand face to face with Great Britain.'

Britain reacted to such dissenting coverage with different types of retaliation (Najjar, 2005; Al Kayali, 1968), including the arrest of journalists, and even the execution of three prominent political activists: Atta Al Zir, Mohammed Jamjoum and Fouad Hijazi. Their executions were carried out by the British government and Jewish combatants. Many newspapers then began a 40-day strike to protest against these executions. After the strike, the *Filistin* wrote: 'Force enabled us to speak, and the crime was committed on the podium'. *Al Yarmouk* ran another headline that listed the names of those killed on its front page. According to the archives of *Al Zubour* (17 June, 1930), the three men were executed one after another at 8, 9 and 10 am, during which time all the church bells and mosques sounded their mourning. Even today, their names are still remembered and Palestinian children learn about their heroism in school, and in national songs (Matar, 2010).

During this turbulent period, internal disputes still took place, as in Jaffa, for example, where a long-standing dispute between Roman Catholics and Muslims continued over ownership of a cemetery (Najjar, 2005). Factions would use newspapers to spread their own political messages. Yet, despite this, from print media archives and other documents it appears that political revolt was able to moderate factionalism, as some broadly shared perspectives started to emerge among most newspapers, regarding the need to return and retain the

land, around shared opposition to mass Jewish immigration, and of the need to protect the rights of workers and farmers (Najjar, 2005). Different sections of the press would also call for an end to colonialism worldwide at that time.

Throughout this period, the press improved its content, quality and professionalism. Palestinian reporters worked internationally, from Saudi Arabia and Syria to Egypt, including Yousef Yassin, Mahmoud Al Khaimi, Abdelhadi Erfan and Mosallam Bseso (Al Aqqad, 1967). With the improvement of standards of professional journalism, the distribution of newspapers, including Palestinian newspapers, also grew.

Old land-owning families and highly educated elites no longer had a monopoly on political parties, and on the media. For example, a year after the Fourth Conference for Community Labor in 1922, Arab workers formed the Palestinian Community Party (PCP), with the aim of actively resisting the British Mandate. The party gained popular support throughout the Arab region (Mahafza, 1989). The party had strong ties with women's organisations and other progressive groups working in Palestine (Mahafza, 1989). This strong association with women's groups distinguished the Palestinian Community Party from other parties at the time. The communist approach of including women in the revolutionary movement influenced the party.

Moscow recognised the PCP as a national, progressive Arabic party, opposing imperialism (Mahafza, 1989). In 1929, the party slogans called for the ousting of the British and an end to Jewish immigration to Palestine. Rather than Jerusalem, the party chose Beit Safafa, a village close to Jerusalem, populated mainly with poor farmers, for its meetings and headquarters. The movement worked hand in hand with the National Movement in 1933 by calling for a boycott of Zionist and British products. Communist Party newspapers that supported the party, farmers and workers (Najjar, 2005; Abu Shanab: 2001) included *Al Ghad* and *Al Etyhad*. The latter is still published today.

2.4 Women's Voices in the Middle East

The role of women journalists and publishers during the inter-war years needs further attention, especially since women's role is not often mentioned in other publications on the media in Palestine. Nonetheless,

we do know from research by Suliman (1987) that women worked on the layout of newspapers, in printing presses, and in some cases wrote op-ed articles that voiced 'the woman's point of view' on current issues, including under the British Mandate. In this way, messages were being relayed to a wider and wider audience of those opposed to Zionism, and the role of the press in informing more sections of the population, including women and young people, started to be recognised as crucial by some editors and newspaper owners (Suliman, 1987).

All in all, the records and archival materials of the Palestinian press show that in the inter-war years, intellectuals, farmers, and women living in Palestinian villages and cities increasingly came to rely on newspapers to get their information. After the Al Buraq revolution in 1929, this had become a real concern for the British Mandate, with the Shaw Commission (Miller, 2010) explicitly stating: 'Palestinian farmers are more politically aware than many of the Europeans, despite the high illiteracy rate among them' (Alloush, 1975: 22). This included the women farmers, whose political activity increased at this time, and started to be reported on in the press. In response to this rising awareness, a new law introduced in 1932 imposed strict controls over what could be reported, and the British authorities started to imprison those who opposed the Mandate, and this included women (Suliman, 1988).

From the start of the 1920s, the press focused some attention on women's issues. This mainly related to the household, but it also included commentary and news on women as part of local agricultural communities, and sometimes in politics and public life (Najjar, 2005). One story stands out in this respect. In 1929, a group of 200 women organized an Al Quds Conference in support of the, until then very male-dominated, National Movement. On 30 October 1929, in *Sawt Al Sh'aab* (The People's Voice), the event was reported as the 'First Arab Women's Conference'.

The women's conference focused on stopping Jewish immigration to Palestine and putting an end to the Balfour Declaration. The Palestinian press reported on these demands at the time (Najjar, 2005). In the same year, Christian and Muslim Palestinian women demonstrated together in front of foreign consulates in Jerusalem, also attracting media attention. The *Filistin* and *Al Defa'a* newspapers viewed their own (male) journalists' presence alongside the female protesters as a form of paternal

protection. Articles in these papers listed the names of the women organizing the protest, to bring attention to their role.

Women's affairs became more visible in the rest of the printed press as well, at this time. In the *Al Karmel* newspaper, for example, part of its layout was dedicated to a 'Women's Journal.' This offered women the chance to write in with opinion pieces (*Al Karmel* newspaper: 1926). Articles with headings like 'To the daughter of my town,' 'A word to the wife,' and 'Marriage and Partnership' were published, mainly about family relations. But when Sadej Nassar, herself married to Najeeb Nassar, owner of the *Al Karmel* newspaper, was arrested by the British authorities in 1935 for political activism against the Balfour Declaration, this was widely reported on (Moghannam, 1937). The British extended her incarceration period from 3 to 6 months, and other Palestinian Arab women, political activists and journalists like Asma Tobi, Samira Azzam and Mary Shehadeh, publicly defended Nassar and protested against her continued imprisonment. Moghannam (1937) documented the first broadcast on Palestinian Radio of a women's affairs programme. Mofeeda Al Dabagh introduced the programme, which covered social and family topics. Women also used this programme to communicate their political messages, including objections to foreign expansion into Palestinian lands under the British Mandate.

The British tended to punish Palestinian journalists for opinions they (the British) found unacceptable by shutting down newspapers. In response, the Palestinian press protested against such one-sided censorship. In the *People's Voice* newspaper, it was argued: 'All newspapers should enjoy press freedom... you don't stop the Jewish press, while Arab press overflows with calm peace and contentment, and we see Jewish press spouting venom and poison ... leading to chaos and unrest' (*People's Voice*, 2 December 1929). In 1929, women had also become involved in the Revolution that took place, gaining unprecedented attention in the Palestinian media, and provoking a harsh British government response (Suliman, 1987) toward both the press in Palestine and in neighbouring countries. As repression on male journalists and editors was stepped up, if anything women became more active during this period of unrest and uncertainty for the printed press (Najjar, 2005).

2.5 Elite Competition, Factionalism and the Arab Revolt

As women started to have a more active role in the Palestinian media and in politics, so did youth. A constant sense of being treated unjustly and oppressively under the British Mandate motivated Palestinian youth to organise a conference in 1932. This established a new political party, the Istiqlal (Independence Party), which also launched a paper named *Al Kefah* (The Struggle). The aim was to promote Arab products and establish cooperation between the working class and farmers. In the same year, the Palestinian Youth Party was also established by Rasem Al Khalidi and others. In 1935, the new leader, Yacoub Al Ghussien, launched the *Al Kefah* newspaper, though this did not last long due to financial difficulties.

Under a law introduced by the British in 1935, an editor-in-chief of a newspaper had to have a university degree (Najjar, 2005; Suliman, 1987), an elitist and discriminatory condition, in the light of the growing trend of women, workers and farmers towards self-organisation. The National Defense Party (NDP) was established by Rageb Al Nashashibi when he failed to win in the Jerusalem municipal elections. Journalists and editors like Issa Al Issa of the *Filistin* newspaper joined the political faction of Al Nashashibi, a wealthy group of individuals, the cultural and social elite, including those from *Al Quds* (Khila, 1974).

Some elites were complicit at this time in the loss of land to Jewish settlers. Three main newspapers spoke on the elites' behalf, including the *Filistin*, the *Miraat Al Sharq* (Mirror of the East), and the *Serat-ul-Mostaqem* (The Straight Path) (Najjar; 2005; Najjar, 1975). In a historic newspaper article on 3 December 1934 (*Filistin*, 1934)⁵, these founders of the NDP pledged to end their role as middlemen, trading and mediating in the sale of land to Jewish settlers. Instead, they pledged themselves to the full liberation of Palestine and the establishment of a government of national unity. However, some historians doubted that these elites could survive outside the close relationships maintained with the British under the Mandate. To some extent, this reliance on the British echoed the elites' previous relations with the Ottomans (Khila, 1974).

For some historians, the most important single moment in the pre-Second World War history of nationalism in the Palestinian media is the Arab Revolt of 1936-39 (Abu Shanab, 2001). In 1935, Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam was killed and a series of nationalist and popular Palestinian

workers' uprisings began. In the 'Arab Revolts,' Palestinian nationalist armed groups confronted British troops and Zionist gangs, over jobs and land appropriated for Jewish settlers. An interesting movement at this time tried to bring solidarity among Jewish and Arab workers, but failed because of religious divisions. Jewish organisations' factionalism was echoed by factionalism among Palestinians. Intense rivalry followed for Palestinian leadership, again involving the Al Nashashibis and Al Hussinis. Their own ownership of massive tracts of land meant they were less vulnerable to seizures than poorer Palestinian farmers and workers, however, and this led these elites to largely ignore the Zionist threat of land seizures, until it was almost too late (Al Namy, 2010).

Jamal Al Hussini then presented his own party, the Arabic Palestinian Party (APP), as opposed to the elitist NDP of Ragheb Al Nashashibi. The objectives of Al Hussini's Arabic Palestinian Party included the liberation of Palestine, resistance to establishing a national Jewish home in Palestine, and closer connections between Palestine and the surrounding Arab territories and countries, to form a common front among Arab political factions in Palestine (Al Hout, 1986). In fact, the APP did establish this wider network, with offices opening up new channels of communication with the leadership in Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Jordan (Al Hout, 1968, Al Kayali, 1968). Well-funded, the APP had nine newspapers to advocate on its behalf, including *Al Jami'aa Al Arabiya* (The Arabic Federation), *Al Wedha Al Arabia* (Arabic Unity) and *Al Nidal* (The Struggle). The party established two English language journals: *The Arab Federation* and *The Arab Times* (Abu Shanab: 2001).

In 1935, the NDP split when Dr Hussein Fakhri Al Khalidi - who did not agree with the Party's approach of negotiating with the British - created his own political party, Al Islah (the Reform Party). Khalidi lobbied both Christians and Muslims and maintained good relations with the Al Hussini family (Abu Fakher, 2003). At this time, most political parties were centred on Jerusalem, the capital, and extended their influence to Palestinian villages and towns from there, usually to the region of origin of the party leader or faction (Najjar, 2005; Al Dajjani, 1989).

What made the Reform Party unusual was that, although officially launched in Ramallah, it included among its founding members the mayors of Ramallah, Gaza and Bethlehem, in addition to scores of

lawyers. The Party was the first to bring together reforming elites from different parts of Palestine. The Reform Party did not create its own ‘factional’ newspaper, and relied on the existing and extensive media outlets of the Al Hussini family (Abu Fakher, 2003). The Reform Party called for a new treaty between Arabs of Palestine and the British, modelled on the 1935 treaty between Britain and Iraq. Al Bendek, then mayor of Bethlehem, and in the Reform Party, did not even use his own newspaper, *Sawt Al Sh’aab* (People’s Voice) as a platform for his party, perhaps reflecting his interest in reversing the dominant factionalism of the media at that time.

The British authorities could not control the expansion of the Palestinian printed press, and instead introduced the Palestine Broadcasting Service (PBS) in 1936, as part of the BBC (Al-Omari, 2010). PBS broadcast in English, Arabic and Hebrew. Palestinian newspaper archives document the first time on PBS radio that a Jewish news announcer used the Hebrew phrase *Eretz Yisrael* (the land of Israel), sparking negative reactions in the *Filistin* in its edition of 2 April 1936. This would be a taste of things to come.

2.6 Palestinian Journalism Post-Nakba (1948-67)

After 1948, Palestinian media were trapped inside occupied lands along with the remaining 150,000 Palestinians who were not expelled during the war of 1947-48. In the West Bank and Gaza, under military rule, the press was governed by oppressive laws (Ayalon, 2004). Great Britain officially handed Palestine to the State of Israel in the middle of 1948, in line with the Balfour Declaration’s stated aim of creating a Jewish state in Palestine. This was immediately followed by the UN Partition Plan (Schneer, 2010). Britain also supplied the Zionists who took over the State of Israel with the weapons and political support they needed to secure military victory over Arab nationalist forces.

Even before the 1950s, a new form of media expression, known as ‘resistance journalism,’ began to emerge in Palestine in reaction to the consequences of the Nakba. Small publications like the *Falstinana* and the *Nida Al Hayat* (The Call for Life), the *Filisteen Al Thawra* (Palestine the Revolution), the *Al Hadaf* (The Target) and the *Al Horrya* (Freedom), promoted a culture of armed resistance to military occupation, from shortly after the Nakba and the 1948 war onward (Al-Omari, 2010; Abu

Shanab: 2001). From the Nakba until the 1950s or so - although some newspapers were distributed from the West Bank - Palestinian media mostly survived from within the institutional set-up of the Jordanian media. This 'channel of resistance' benefited both sides, and followed the devastation of the Arabic printed press in Palestine (Abu Hasheesh, 2005; Christoph and Seebold, 2001).

When a coalition of Arab forces did fight back in protest at the military occupation of Palestine, they had little chance of winning a military victory because of huge difference in both the size of the weapons arsenal and the level of external support, after the expulsions of 1947-1948 had left the Palestinian political authorities in disarray (Al Namy, 2010; Gordon, 2008).

Once the state of Israel was established, Palestine was divided. The West Bank fell under the control of what was then referred to as Trans-Jordan, and control of Gaza was given to Egypt. The West Bank remained under Jordanian rule from 1948 to 1967. Until 1955, when Jordan issued a new law that forbade an editor-in-chief of a newspaper from holding another job, Ottoman laws continued to apply to the press in Jordan. As the rest of Palestinian land came under the control of the newly declared state of Israel, in Gaza the printed press was still in its infancy; most Palestinian printing presses were still concentrated around Jaffa, Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Some newspapers and publications were halted completely during the 1948 war. Others kept printing, including the *Filistin*, which continued publication during the war and resumed production in February 1948, after relocating offices to Amman. The newspaper became a loyal defender of King Abdullah (Matar, 2010; Najjar, 2005) and called for Palestinians to accept Jordanian citizenship. After Issa Al Issa died in 1950, the newspaper moved to Jerusalem in 1952 and was headed by Kamal Nasser. Records show that the newspaper improved in content, layout and coverage and thus became more competitive with other newspapers (Abu Shanab, 2001). The *Filistin* was eventually shut down by Jordanian decree, after which it merged with the *Al Manar*, and re-emerged as the *Al Dostoor* (The Constitution).

The *Al Defa'a* (The Defence) ceased publication in Jaffa after the war, but started publishing again from Cairo in 1958, and was distributed from there to Jordan and the West Bank. A few years later, the *Al Defa'a*

was moved to Jerusalem and started to print from the Islamic Orphans House (Abu Shanab, 2001) with Sadek Al Shanti as the person in charge. The editor-in-chief was Al Shanti's brother, Ibrahim Al Shanti. The *Al Jami'aa Al Islamiyah* (The Islamic Federation) also resumed printing after the war and was considered one of the major newspapers at the time. Its first edition was published in Jordan in 1949, with Haider Al Farouqi serving as editor. However, this newspaper did not last long.

The *Al Jihad* (The Struggle), another newspaper, was originally established by Mahmoud Abul Zalaf, who also served as its editor-in-chief, and Salim Al Sharif, its managing editor. This paper continued publishing until 1953 (Abu Shanab, 2001). The *Al Anfoq Al Jadeed* (New Horizons) was an art and culture magazine introduced in 1961 in Jerusalem, until it was banned in 1966. The *Fatat Al Belad* (Daughter of the Nations), was started in 1950 by the Al Fatah Association in Ramallah, and was the only outlet advocating women's rights. The magazine covered family affairs and women's issues, ensuring the newspaper had a higher level of readership than many others at the time.

Gaza shares a border with Egypt at Rafah, so it is natural for the two populations to have had a close relationship in the past. When the 1948 war was over, the United Nations pressed for a truce between Egypt and the newly established Israeli state on 24 February 1949. As a result, Gaza remained under Egyptian control. Following the 1956 war, Palestinians became more active on their own behalf, and Gazans were keen to further their own education, hoping to use their awareness to mitigate the unbearable poverty and harsh conditions already becoming evident in Gaza at that time (Nasser et al., 2011).

In 1948, Gazan media still had a set of technologies that was very different from the printed presses elsewhere in Palestine. Most news was in the form of wall articles, handouts and fliers in schools, or at festivals and cultural events. However, after 1950, newspapers, photography and media art began to appear more and more in Gaza (Abu Shanab, 2001). The newspaper business in Gaza was daunting due to Gaza's lack of financial and human resources, unlike the West Bank, which was better funded and more centralised. Egypt also imposed strict censorship, demanding that newspaper articles in Gaza should be officially approved two days prior to printing (Abu Hasheeh, 2005; Al Dalou: 2000).

Other constraints made it difficult for Gaza's media to compete with the comparatively low publication and distribution costs in Egypt,

including financial limitations of local investors. Despite all these obstacles, several small-scale newspapers were funded locally and brought the voice of Gazans into the printed press, and much later to a wider audience via the internet. The *Al Saraba* (Honesty) was available from 1952 to 1963 and published by a small printing shop owned by the Abu Shabaan family who published the paper at a social club for Communist Palestinians. The editors were Saed Felfel and Moeen Bseso, later replaced by Abuel Khawaled Al Saqqa, who gave the paper a new content and layout. The *Ghazzab* (Gaza) was printed from 1950 to 1964 by a publishing house owned by Kamaleldeen Abu Shabaan. The *Ghazzab* was considered one of the most widely distributed and popular newspapers in Gaza at the time. The *Alleowa'a* (The Brigade) was published from 1954 to 1961 by Hajj Mussa Al Sourani, Dr Salah Abu Kmael and Mouneer Al Rayyes, and was the voice of traditional national parties. The *Al Wehda* (The Unity), was published from 1954 to 1964 by Majed Al Alami, and was one of the most party-based newspapers, expressing the politics and views of the Ba'ath Arab Communist Party.

The *Al Mustaqbal* (The Future) magazine, was published from 1952 to 1956, by Mohammed Jalal Anayah and was a vehicle for authors of his choice as well as for his personal friends. Zuhir Al Rayyes and Mohammed Al Radwan began publishing the *Al Tabrir* (The Liberation) in 1956. The newspaper has a record of professional editors running its editorial desk. (Abu Hasheesh, 2005). The *Akbbar Falstin* (Palestine News), which appeared in 1964, was the official newspaper for the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and received technical support, supervision and training of its staff from Egypt's Today's News Association *Akbbar Al Youm* (Abu Hassesh, 2005). After that, the newspaper received support from the PLO.

2.7 Perceptions of the Press under Israeli Occupation

Only two decades had passed since the 1947 Nakbah (the Catastrophe) and the Israeli war of 1948, before a new war broke out in June 1967 between Israel and Arab States, with the latter defeated by the former. As a result, all of Palestine now came under Israeli control, as did large areas of land in Egypt, Syria and Jordan. After the Naksa (the Israeli war of 1967), the Palestinian press in Gaza and the West Bank faced a dramatic recession. Most newspapers stopped publishing, which created

a news gap that was filled by Palestinians using alternate methods of distribution, which included radio stations, leaflets, graffiti on walls, handouts and wall posters in churches and mosques. Israeli occupation gave rise to the short-lived *Al Youm* (The Day) newspaper. It was followed by *Al Anbaa* (The News) in 1967, which had a better chance at manoeuvring the Palestinian population by addressing them in their own language, Arabic. Despite the large Israeli financial support behind *Al Youm*, it was never widely circulated, and had few readers (Abu Hasheesh; 2001). The Israeli authorities established unions for villages, instead of more nationalist representatives, and established the newspaper *Al Maraa* (The Mirror) which also failed to attract many readers.

At any rate, the above-mentioned three newspapers were the topic of intellectual squabbling among Palestinians, divided about whether or not to accept them (Al-Omari, 2010; Christoph and Seebold, 2001), at a time when Palestinian newspapers were subject to licensing by Israel. Disagreement was caused by the general assumption among Palestinians and other Arabs that Israeli occupation was still temporary. The longer the Israeli occupation lasted, the more Palestinians realised the crucial role media outlets would play in bringing Palestinian concerns to local, regional and international audiences. This is why Palestinians soon began to seek permits to establish their own media outlets. In total, from 1967-1987, less than two dozen permits were issued to news media outlets in Arabic, in Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, by the late 1980s, an estimated 40 local, regional and international media offices were established inside Palestinian territories.

Whether through the British Mandate and laws from 1945, or under Israeli military 'emergency' laws implemented in 1948, the Palestinian press was tightly controlled. Israel used several methods to oppress the media, including closure of newspapers under the pretext of their not abiding by the general rules of military occupation. Some offices were closed for a few weeks or months at a time, others were shut down permanently (Burton, 2015:120, Al Faqeh, 2011: 19). Other methods of oppression included sending journalists into exile due to their political affiliation or following editorial statements hostile to Israeli occupation (Azoulay and Ophir, 2012). In 1974, Israel expelled Ali Al Khateeb, journalist and editor-in-chief of *Al Sh'aab* (The People), as well as journalist Hassan Abdeljawwad Farajneh. Akram Haniyeh, another well-

known editor-in-chief of *Al Sh'aab*, was also expelled some years later, in 1986. The kidnapping and assassination of Palestinian journalists was also a common Israeli response. In 1975, journalist Yousef Nasser, editor-in-chief of *Al Fajr* (The Dawn) disappeared, as did Hassan Abdelhaleem, a reporter at the same magazine, who was kidnapped and later found dead.

Journalists including Bashir Al Barghouti, Radwan Abu Aish, Hamdy Faraj and Abdelatif Ghait were all put under house arrest for writing against Israeli practices under military occupation (Fridh and Wingren, 2015; Al-Omari, 2010). Israel carried out what were called administrative arrests and hundreds of media employees were detained, including Walid Salim, Mahmoud Al Ramhi, Hassan Abdeljawwad, Zyad Abu Zyad, Talal Safi, and Fawzi Al Shoubaki. The Israeli administration prevented or hampered newspaper distribution by not allowing equipment and materials to be transferred between Palestinian villages, towns and cities, thereby seeking to prevent the circulation of information, and impose isolation on scattered populations (Al-Omari, 2010).

During the 1960s and 1970s, despite all these obstacles and forms of repression, Palestinian media continued to produce new publications including: the *Al Quds* from 1967 onward, which was the very first Palestinian-controlled newspaper to appear after Israel occupied Palestine. It was published in the West Bank and in Jerusalem, and distributed regionally and beyond (Najjar, 2005). The founder of the *Al Quds* was Mahmoud Abuel Zalaf, and his name still appears on the front page of the newspaper to this day.

The *Al Quds* newspaper, one of Palestine's most important newspapers, is still published in both the West Bank and in Gaza Strip. Its roots go back to 1951 when it was known under the earlier title of *Al Jihad*. In 1967, it became *Al Quds*. The newspaper appears to favour the PA and PLO leadership, although nowadays it attempts to present more balanced coverage of events (Al-Omari, 2010). For many years, Israel did not allow the PA to distribute *Al Quds* in Gaza as part of a general policy meant to isolate Gaza after Hamas won elections there (Al-Omari, 2010). Ironically, the Israelis need not have bothered to ban *Al Quds* in Gaza Strip, since in 2009 it was banned by the *de facto* authorities, for being perceived as hostile towards the Hamas version of Islamism (Fridh and Wingren, 2015).

First published in 1995, after the PA was established, the *Al-Ayyam* (The Days) newspaper belongs to Al Ayyam publishing house in Ramallah and its editor-in-chief Akram Hanyeh is close to PA and Fatah leadership. The newspaper has suffered financially in recent years, and had to reduce its staff, and survive by publishing advertisements. Following critical reporting on Hamas, this paper too was banned in Gaza, by the *de facto* Hamas government. The *Al Manar* (The Lightstand) newspaper, started in 1992, and was one of the few genuinely independent newspapers published in Jerusalem. The newspaper leans toward the perspective of Fatah, with a nationalist liberation agenda, but also defends the rights of all Palestinians with its coverage of abuses against civilians across all Palestinian territories, inside Israel and beyond.

Introduced in 1993 by Nabil Amro, a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council who held several ministerial positions over the years, the *Al Hayat Al Jadeeda* (New Life) had its staff enrolled in the PA salary scheme (Abu Haseesh, 2005). This inevitably influenced their coverage and gave PA officials a platform from which to express their positions. The *de facto* government of Hamas also banned this newspaper from Gaza, also for allegedly being hostile to Hamas.

Although several other newspapers are worth mentioning, for the historical record (and more can be seen in Appendix 4), during the past couple of decades, under the Palestinian Authority, the three leading newspapers have been *Al Quds*, *Al Ayyam* and *Al Hayat Al Jadeeda*. Their survival is a positive development for Palestinian media despite the difficult circumstances caused by Israeli occupation and the restrictions this imposes on Palestinian editors, journalists and publishers. In the case of Gaza, even today, the majority of Gaza's journalistic production is still smaller in terms of circulation than for the West Bank media, and the media in Gaza is still funded mainly by political factions and by individual elite families. This division of the printed press between West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza helps explain why satellite TV has become such an important form of media for the political authorities in Gaza as well as in the West Bank. This can also start to explain the pressures on producers to defactionalise so as to appeal to wider audiences, beyond those confined in each of the several segregated territories of Palestine.

2.8 New Perspectives on Palestinian Media since 1994

Middle Eastern scholars vary in how they define contemporary Palestinian media, and how far back they trace its origins. However, for the purposes of this study, I see 1994 as the starting date for a new phase in the history of Palestinian national media, first because the Oslo Agreement was signed in 1993 (Al Turk, 2008; Abu Hashesh, 2005), and second because in 1994, as mentioned, Israel for the first time issued the Palestinian Authority a license to organise mass media including a TV station, the *Palestine Satellite Channel* (PSC). The children's programme and cultural programme of this same channel (in its satellite variety) are part of the main focus of this study. Secondly, although almost 20 years have passed since the Oslo Agreement, not much has changed in Palestine despite the rapid growth of satellite TV media outlets as already traced in Chapter 1. The year 1994 is a significant year, however, since it marks the start of a period that can be called 'contemporary' in relation to media in Palestine.

In 1994, the PA was at last able to establish a Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) during the early post-Oslo years. The first Palestinian TV and radio stations started broadcasting from inside Palestine under the supervision of the Palestinian authorities. The PA control freed the media from the external restrictions imposed on print media by the remaining British-based Jordanian laws. Censorship previously imposed on factional and political content by the Israeli military was also significantly reduced during the early post-Oslo Agreement years. Although censorship is hard to measure, one study estimates that for this period, compared with earlier years, censorship of the printed press was roughly halved (Al-Omari, 2010: 33). In addition, other media such as radio and TV started to be granted licenses, where previously these had been refused.

Soon Hamas started to win elections and started to counter the PA's largely factional media perspectives and news, and this – in turn – challenged Fatah's policies and media agendas. 1994 thus also marked the start of a period of marked polarisation, including in television and the printed press, and of factionalism. Despite, or perhaps because of the new freedoms acquired during the post-Oslo period, these years were characterised in an interview with the chief correspondent of *Al Jazeera*, as a 'period of polarisation' (Al-Omari, 2010: 23).

In the post Oslo Agreement period, the PA was given the opportunity to work on broadcasting and media, including by building media institutions, news wires, and radio stations. They received Western aid and training for Palestinian journalists (Forgione, 2004) and production staff. In 1995, the PA introduced the Palestinian Publication and Publishing Law, the first law to be presented as a draft by the PA's Minister of Media to former President Yasser Arafat. The law was approved later the same year, and annulled previous laws, including the Ottoman, British Mandate, Jordanian, Egyptian and Israeli laws that had previously been in force. The new law was complex, containing 50 articles, each with several sub-clauses. The hope was that the new law could help address Palestinian aspirations for greater freedom of expression. Despite its complexity, the law was approved, mainly because Palestinians felt the need to have a law they had designed themselves to govern the media, rather than one imposed by other authorities.

Unfortunately, from the start, the law itself was criticised for violating press freedoms (Burton, 2015; Abu Hasheeh, 2005). In a study conducted around 1995, 228 journalists from the West Bank and Gaza Strip took part in a survey. Almost two-thirds, 59%, of them felt there were implicit redlines they could not cross or bypass in terms of what they reported under the new law. Over half, 53%, stated that their written reports and articles were censored by their editors, usually to avoid a negative reaction from the (Palestinian) authorities (Al-Omari, 2010). And 63% stated they had adopted voluntary forms of self-censorship in response to this general situation of uncertainty (Al-Omari, 2010: 52).

The Palestinian Center for Human Rights was critical of the new media law, considering it to restrict press freedom, by not providing for the possibility for courts to review cases of press freedom violations. It was also unclear whether the law was transitional or was meant to be permanent. In Jerusalem, it was claimed that Israel did not allow the PA to directly control or interfere with Palestinian media expression, seeing this as something under exclusive Israeli control (Al-Omari, 2010). This meant that freedoms granted by the new law were quite limited in practice, especially in Jerusalem, because of other restrictive measures imposed under Israeli occupation, which Palestinian media could challenge, but not ignore (Al Dalou, 2000).

The tight controls aimed at excluding Hamas and Islamic Jihad from Palestinian media outlets during the 1990s and early 2000s, were widely believed to be the result of security coordination between the PA and Israel to crack down on Islamists. This left as little space as possible for the Islamic discourse associated with Hamas and other Islamist factions. At the same time, articles by leftist writers hardly saw the light of day. This led to demands by Islamists and by Palestinian leftist factions to have their own media outlets. As one researcher noted, such conflicting demands played into the hands of the Israelis, and the media became ‘the main tool for two squabbling parties, each trying to use it for their interest...[which was] similar to free indirect service to the Israeli occupation’ (Yousef, 2015: 250).

In some cases, Palestinian media offices and personnel were even attacked by rival Palestinian clans and factions for their ‘biased’ media coverage. PA security forces did not offer much protection against these kinds of attacks (Al-Omari, 2010). There were physical attacks against local factional media, and also against local journalists and media professionals who worked for various international media agencies (Fridh and Wingren, 2015). One example was the attack on the journalist Saifeldeen Saheen, who worked for Al-Arabya. He eventually fled in 2007, and was later granted asylum in Norway.

When satellite media first started to broadcast in and around Palestine, Islamist leaders were not allowed to appear on air. This same tactic was used by Israel in 1993 when it forbade the appearance of the PA leadership in TV broadcasts, for what were claimed to be ‘legal and political reasons’ (Al-Omari, 2010: 33). Banned from satellite TV completely in an effort to prevent their voices from being heard, Islamic political factions then more or less predictably started to establish their own media outlets (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013). They distributed leaflets, posters and newspapers, placed messages on radio stations and created online websites until they acquired satellite TV channels of their own. Thus, a medium ordinarily used to express the views of dominant powers, started to express different kinds of ‘factional’ views not previously heard.

In parallel with a notable rise in the number and range of media outlets across Palestine, Palestinian universities also started to run courses and offer degrees in journalism and media, including TV

broadcasting, print media, radio, and later, on-line journalism. The Association of Arab Journalists, created in 1979, was renamed the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate (PJS) in 1994. From the viewpoint of many journalists, this was a great step forward, marking the creation of a professional body that could potentially provide support to journalists across Palestine. However, unfortunately, but maybe not that surprisingly, the PJS also ended up serving factional interests, and was closely aligned with Fatah (which offered its leaders wages through the PA Ministry of Finance.) Rather than being national in their agendas, or adhering more closely to journalistic professional standards, the PJS itself quite soon became factionalised (Abu Hasheesh, 2005; Christoph and Seebold, 2001).

As was discussed above, after the PA was established, a number of new media outlets sprang up, and these included the Wafa News Agency. This was established by a factional decree from Fatah's PLO in 1972. In 1994, both the *Palestine Satellite Channel* and the Palestine Radio were launched by an order issued by PLO chairman Yasser Arafat to Radwan Abu Ayyash. The TV signal was at first carried on the Egyptian satellite, NileSat. Also in 1994, the Ministry of Media was created with US and EU financial support. Most staff working in the media's administration and production had no formal journalism or media training, however. A few years later, in 1999, the Palestinian State Information Service was created under the direct supervision of, and with funding from, President Arafat.

From July 1994 until the beginning of the second Intifada in September 2000, the Ministry of Media issued 148 licenses to newspapers, local radio stations, TV stations and magazines (Al-Omari, 2010: 70). Many of these permits were granted to political factions and non-governmental organisations. By 2004, the Palestinian Ministry of Media had recognized 32 local TV stations, including Palestine TV, which was based in Gaza City, while others were in the West Bank (Al-Omari, 2010: 70-72). The Ministry of Media was headed by Fatah leaders, and so was the PSC. Overall, the PA's Ministry of Media had monopolised the granting of licenses, and allocated them almost exclusively to loyal Fatah-related media and related factional, commercial and compliant independent media outlets.

2.9 Palestinian TV Becomes (More) Factional

Without the signing of the Declaration of Principles in Washington (1993), followed by the Oslo Accords, there would not have been an opening for contemporary national Palestinian media or Palestinian TV (on the Accords, see Bauck and Omer (eds.), 2013), since prior to 1993, Palestinians were without visual media of their own. They had to rely on print media to articulate their point of view and rely on Israeli TV channels in Arabic such as *'Jordan Channel One'*, *'Egypt Channel One'* and *'Egypt Channel Two'* (Kuttab, 1993; Kuttab, 2010) for information about the world around them. Eventually, new professionals looked for alternatives to challenge the style and content of Palestine TV (Batrawi, 2001) and a new wave of private TV channels started to appear. One of the first TV station was established in Nablus by a college student, who had majored in physics and constructed his own TV transmitter (Daraghmeh, 2000).

As with the printed press, so too TV media outlets started off as family enterprises. Private TV stations could broadcast from homes, even from a tiny room, for example in Gaza. As with many early printing presses, staff members were mostly family members including husbands, wives and even children (Masri, 2000; Nazzal, 2000 cited in Batrawi, 2001). Among the 32 TV stations in existence across Palestine by the late 1990s, content and programming quality varied greatly. Almost 60 percent of content was entertainment and culture, around education, sport and religion counted for 5 percent each. Politics made up just below 25% of content (Batrawi, 2001). Private TV stations survived financially on advertisements in the commercial breaks. After a license from the Ministry of Information was received, the booking of a transmission frequency came with tight regulations.

The relative success in terms of audience figures of Nablus TV caused others to consider establishing their own TV stations. This type of local TV station was appreciated by the general public, especially in Northern West Bank villages where the Palestine TV signal was weak (Batrawi, 2001). People also appreciated alternative stations that represented the opposition, including leftist political factions and Islamists (Batrawi, 2001:4). Being both socially and politically marginalised reinforced a sense among Palestinians of a shared identity (Matar, 2010: 58). At least, the advent of privately owned TV stations made it possible for different

social and political groups to interact. Private media also became an alternative to Fatah-affiliated TV stations during the outbreak of the Intifada (Iz Al-Deen, 2000:13). This was because few of the big TV station staff remained embedded in villages and cities at times of overt risk to themselves.

Private TV channels started to blend cultural and political programming into what one scholar termed a 'culture of resistance' (Al Batrawi, 2001: 19). Al Batrawi argued that such programming enhanced popular Palestinian culture by focusing on inherited music, folk traditions and the arts. He believed that by combining popular and 'high' culture in one format, private TV stations helped equalise the social status of elites with that of ordinary Palestinian people. Some scholars have evaluated the experience of private Palestinian TV media as extremely successful, especially given all the political, social and economic constraints on production of Palestinian media in general (Al Faqesh, 2011; Al Batrawi, 2001; Iz Al-Deen, 2000).

Of course, the inherited factionalism embedded in people's daily lives in different parts of Palestine did not simply disappear after the Oslo Accords were signed. In fact, factionalism became a practice for groups and individuals seeking ways to promote their own narrow agendas, which reinforced the factionalism of Palestinian TV. Though it was slightly encouraged by the pioneering experience of private TV, factional Palestinian TV went hand in hand with factional Palestinian print media as platforms for informing the Palestinian public. The mixture of both print and TV media in this historical account is intentional, as neither can go without the other in presenting an overview of the roots of factionalised media during the intra-Palestinian clashes of 2007 (Yousef, 2015: 249).

After the establishment of the PA, as previously discussed, several local cable TV stations were broadcasting from Palestine albeit with limited range. Cable TV stations are rarely discussed in the historical record as they tended to be relatively small, with localized city audiences in Nablus, Jenin or Bethlehem; they were also short-lived due to closure following government pressure (Al Batrawi, 2001: 8).

Right after the PA established Palestine TV in 1994, the Palestinian Ministry of Media granted 82 licenses for TV and radio stations (Al-Omari, 2010:11), including 32 local TV stations besides the PSC and ASC, all of which broadcast to global audiences, and 28 local radio

stations. These smaller, mostly private TV stations tended not to cover all public needs, and larger stations, such as Palestine TV, broadcast the views of only one party, with a lot of attention to the activities of the President. The priority of PTV was noted as to 'broadcast...news related to the President, then news related to the officials in the PNA, and only then do they remember issues that do not relate to the authority' (Pick, 1997). Coverage includes live coverage of Friday prayers, and news about governmental and factional (Fatah and Hamas) activities.

Control of media ownership in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip varied from governmental, to factional and independent groups. The line between governmental and factional entities has become blurred in the contemporary period, and the term 'factionalism' can also refer – as during previous eras - to widespread partisanship and clannishness of much of the Palestinian media's structure, ownership and content, especially where news is concerned. For instance, much PSC news programming still reflected the views of just one party until quite recently even though the PSC is supposed to be independent (Al Batrawi, 2001: 4-5). For some time, Palestinian TV was not openly informative enough to broaden public opinion.

2.10 Conclusion

After the general Palestinian elections of 2006, spaces were opened up for a new wave of Palestinian satellite TV channels, freed from direct Israeli control, and concentrated in Gaza, and, to a lesser extent, in the West Bank. Today, the broadcasts of these satellite media are watched by Palestinians keen for information regarding their own daily lives, and seeking to interact with the wider world outside. Satellite and web-based media have facilitated the capacity of Palestinian culture to transcend geographical and censorship borders. However, because of the diversification of media channels and forms of expression, this latest trend may also reinforce a tendency towards factionalism. Media factionalism that was first associated with the clannishness of media ownership and affiliation in the early twentieth century in relation to the printed press. This has to some extent been replaced by factionalism based on territorial separation of political factions in the divided lands of historical Palestine. Three distinct areas are held apart by military rule and physical barriers: Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

As argued by Dina Mater and Zahera Harb in *Narrating conflict in the Middle East* (2013), the media has potential as a vehicle for expression of feelings of wider Palestinian nationalism. This study, which draws on the work of Benedict Anderson on nationalism as a sentiment projected onto ‘imagined communities’, corroborates many of the findings of this chapter (Anderson, 2006: 34-39). Central to Anderson’s argument is the idea that nationalism is encouraged by the appearance of the print media, through which elites can start to imagine themselves as sharing identities beyond the clan, village and place of worship. Indeed as the historical account in this chapter suggests, the idea of the Palestinian nation first started to be articulated in a few relatively independent publications.

This chapter has provided the background, perceptions and perspectives around media under British rule, after 1948 under Israeli colonisation and then after the Oslo Agreement which was supposed to end military occupation. Each phase successively reinforced the national imaginary of a united Palestine, inhabited by people who thought of themselves as Palestinians. Whilst Palestinians’ political identities were being factionalised, their national and cultural identities were being reimagined as relatively unified.

Historically, some continuities in the ambiguous role of the media in relation to nationalism and Palestinian identity, have been pointed to in this chapter. It appears reasonable to expect that more non-news media content might help shift media beyond the narrow factionalisms of the past. This includes children’s and cultural programmes like those selected for this study. To explore further how media operates both as a force for expressing sectarian, political and factional divisions in society and as a force for imagining their opposite, the next chapter introduces an analytical framework, explains the key conceptual tools used in the rest of the study, and explains the methodological processes involved in drawing deeper insights from the findings in this study.

Notes

¹ The historical background of the press in Palestine under the Ottoman Empire is the subject of a chapter (published under the name Omer) by the author (see Omer, 2015).

² There was an arts magazine, *The Arab College Magazine*, initiated by Ahmed Sameh Al-Khalidi in 1927. *Rawdet El Maref* (The Meadow of Knowledge), another art journal, continued to publish until the end of the British Mandate. *Al Ghad* (Tomorrow Magazine) was published in Bethlehem in 1938 (see Yaghi, 1980).

³ The source was found on photos in a Gaza library without page numbers.

⁴ Scripts were collected from undated photographs in the Gaza library.

⁵ Scripts were collected from undated photographs in the Gaza library. No page numbers were available. *Al Defa'a*, (The Defence) ceased publication after the war in Jaffa, but started publishing again from Cairo in 1958, and was distributed from there to Jordan and the West Bank. A few years later, *Al Defa'a* was moved to Jerusalem and started to print from the Islamic Orphans House (Abu Shanab, 2001), with Sadek Al Shanti as the person in charge. The editor-in-chief was Al Shanti's brother, Ibrahim Al Shanti. *Al Jami'aa Al Islamiyah* (The Islamic Federation) also resumed printing after the war and was considered one of the major newspapers at the time. Its first edition was published in Jordan in 1949, with Haider Al Farouqi serving as editor. However, this newspaper did not last too long.

3

Towards an Analytical Framework for Understanding Factionalism and Defactionalisation in Palestinian Satellite TV

'If you ask me, the New York Times is factional' (Noam Chomsky, in conversation, 20 November 2011).

'[whether something is factional or partisan]...seems more a matter of convention than of principle' (Noam Chomsky, in conversation, 27 November 2015).

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will theorise the key concepts central to the study, as presented in Chapter 1, especially 'factionalism', and the process of moving beyond factionalism, termed 'defactionalisation' in this study. Each of these terms is related to the wider context of the contemporary media in Palestine. Some key political and social explanations for factionalism and its opposite, defactionalisation, are considered. The analytical framework will later be applied to the content and production processes of children's and cultural satellite TV programmes of the ASC and the PSC, during the chosen research period from March 2009 to January 2010. This chapter discusses an appropriate theoretical framework with which content and production dimensions of the four selected programmes can be analysed and explained. This framework is derived by juxtaposing a 'circuits of media' approach, that considers the factors influencing producers, with a form of thematic content analysis that facilitates comparative work. In this way, children's and cultural programmes of the two selected Hamas and Fatah-oriented satellite TV channels, ASC and PSC, will be analysed in later chapters (4, 5, 6 and 7),

and these analyses integrated in the last two chapters of the thesis (Chapter 8 and 9). In the last part of this chapter, the content analysis framework is operationalised in preparation for Chapters 6 and 7, which focus on how the key themes appear in the content of all 4 programmes.

3.2 Redefining Terms: ‘Factional’ or ‘Partisan’?

According to recent studies, media content mirrors the relationship between governing entities and the social entities they rule over (Flew and Waisboard, 2015, Skuse et al, 2011). Media has been very effective in shaping political realities in Palestine, since it reflects both public opinion and the expectations and opinions of ruling elites (Peterson, 2015). Media in Palestine still continues to play a significant ‘public information’ role, delivering information about administrative policy and changes resulting from legislative decrees to the population, something that started under Ottoman rule and continued under the British Mandate.

Media can be seen as set of spaces that connect people – for instance for the purposes of imagining themselves as one people or nation, and as a historical territory (Matar, 2010; Anderson, 2006). By the same token, media can divide through forces such as party political divisions, location-based identities, and personal forms of rivalry and factionalism (Hroub, 2012). Arguably, although occasionally in the past there were examples of national media spaces, more recently media in Palestine has started to provide more room for genuine popular opinion to be expressed. In Chapter 8, it is suggested that a re-emerging sense of ‘Palestinianism’ is evidence of this emergent national media **that tends to focus less on factional content**. With its IT-based and satellite branches, media has to reflect public opinion more than in the past, and cannot remain about one-directional flows of information directed towards supposedly passive audiences as in the past. New media technologies have enabled more diverse constituencies to express their views in the media, and not only in the news. Palestinian women, young people, religious minorities, creative artists and intellectuals including those in the diaspora, increasingly have their views aired.

One challenge for this study is to arrive at a satisfactory definition of factional media, and factionalism. In the absence of such a definition in the wider literature, a specific definition of factionalism and of its reversal – defactionalisation - will need to be operationalized in the

research process. One early pioneer of media studies, Harold Lasswell (1931: 49), provided an influential definition of a faction as ‘any constituent group of a larger unit which works for the advancement of particular persons or policies’. Historically, especially since the end of the Ottoman Empire, media outlets in Palestine have been associated in various ways with specific, sometimes party-based and sometimes highly personalised, factions. So it may be correct to use the local term, and call them ‘factional’.

The work of Ralph Nicholas (1966) represents another effort to define what ‘faction’ is and therefore what ‘factionalism’ might mean. His definition remains relevant since his work gained attention when first published, as a serious attempt to formulate a socio-anthropological definition of factionalism in peasant societies. For Nicholas, factions are political conflict groupings that are provoked into a sense of self-identification behind a particular leader. A faction differs from other political institutions or forms of organisation in that the individual faction leader (usually a ‘he’ rather than a ‘she’) plays a critical organising role, over and above other formal political divisions, institutions and political ideologies. As ‘a political activity or phenomenon,’ factional conflict involves ‘organised conflict over public power’ (Nicholas, 1966: 52) that emerges in a highly personalised form, taking the shape of struggles over the ‘mechanisms of control over human and material resources,’ mainly between groupings, fragments, factions or parties rallying behind specific individual leaders (Nicholas, 1966).

Factions can be distinguished from political parties as such, both ‘progressive’ and ‘conservative’ ones, since unlike factions, in general, political parties at least: ‘...purport to represent distinct interests within the public, rather than interests of their leadership’ (Nicholas, 1966, 53). Hamas and Fatah have both competed in elections, at least once, yet there are good reasons to consider them to operate as factions rather than as political parties in the usual sense. How they operate within the broader Palestinian national movement is reflected in the local terminology used for both Hamas and Fatah in Arabic, since they are referred to as *Fasae’l*, a term whose closest translation is factions; the Arabic term, *Abḩab*, which translates as political parties, is much less often used when referring to Fatah and Hamas (Abuzanouna, 2012; Tuastad, 2013).

This has influenced the use of the term factionalism in this study. In Arabic, both Hamas and Fatah also term themselves ‘factions’ rather than ‘parties’, since they identify as factions of the wider National Movement. It does seem that in Palestine today, as to some extent in the past, the term ‘factions’ has greater salience in elite and general public opinion and in media discourse than the term ‘political parties’ (Al Ghudrah, 2005).

Since neither Fatah nor Hamas can claim to be ‘more Palestinian’ than the other, given this standoff, their ‘factional’ differences have tended to become more apparent. Historically, leadership conflicts have been nurtured under the specific political and cultural conditions of different parts of Palestine. Those conditions were described in more detail in Chapter 2, which noted the appearance of a certain Gazan exceptionalism also during earlier periods. Traditionally, Fatah was the more secular of the two, and Hamas the more religious. Yet each faction is associated with a: ‘set of discourses, stories, images, spectacles, and varying cultural forms and practices that generate meaning, identities, and political effects’ across Palestinian audiences, and beyond (Durham and Kellner, 2001: 6).

Within any society, public opinion can be swayed by the use of key motifs, both textual and visual. Journalists within a particular faction are likely to make use of such well-known idioms, for ‘cultural texts are saturated with social meanings, they generate political effects, reproducing or opposing governing social institutions and relations of domination and subordination’ (Durham and Kellner, 2001: 6).

When the media’s agendas, producers and content are dominated by factions, we can speak of ‘factional media’, a media that informs the public about the actions, policies and objectives of one of the two or more respective factions. A defining element in factional media is the use of media to vilify the rival faction, as part of an effort to consolidate power (Daouwd, 2011). The ultimate objectives are to gain or retain power, to control information, and to eliminate competing ideas and rival factions that may undermine that power (Daouwd, 2011). A politically driven media discourse is often used as a means to prepare the ground for justifying ‘future actions’ (Leudar et al, 2004: 244). This self-justificatory logic of factional media representations helps to understand, for example, how factional news coverage is produced.

In this research, I use the term ‘factional media’ to define the way the *Al Aqsa Satellite Channel* (ASC) and the *Palestine Broadcasting Corporation* (PBC) of which the PSC is a constituent part, have operated during much of their existence. In so doing I build on Nicholas’ (1966) anthropological understanding of factions, using the term ‘factional’ to express and emphasise how both the ASC and the PBC/PSC have generally expressed highly personalised frames of political leadership. Another study, by Jewell and Olson, explored factions in US party politics, and sees factions inside political parties as being either economically, ideologically, ethnically or geographically-based, or based on personal ambition of a specific leader (Jewell and Olson, 1982). In Palestine, factions tend to combine personal ambition with ideological and geographical polarisation.

Finally, the term factional is preferred as more accurate than the more widely used ‘partisan media’ (Dautrich & Yalof, 2009). According to Nicholas, partisan groups do claim to be working in the service of the greater public, whereas this is not the case for factions, which are explicitly oriented towards a specific leader and set of policies that may not be in the public interest, but which benefit the leader, or leaders, and their followers. The term ‘factional media,’ as opposed to ‘partisan media,’ indicates those media outlets that openly, and even unapologetically promote the interests of their own leader above the interests of other leaders or even of the majority. Partisan media also do this, but try to give the impression of serving the broader public interest at the same time.

Partisan media as a concept is most often used to understand the divisions within the media, for example in the United States, Hong Kong or United Kingdom (Kuyper, 2014; Levendusky, 2013a; Lee, 1985). This study views factional media as distinct from partisan media, a distinction that is significant in the specific geopolitical context of Palestine. With the rise of new political parties and factions in emerging post-authoritarian states such as Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Yemen, the tendency for media in the Middle East region to become factional in terms of content, has if anything risen. Political party-based and faction-related media outlets are growing in numbers, both in satellite TV and in the printed press, magazines and on-line.

Prior to the rise of commercial media, individuals produced newspapers, ‘the penny press,’ and small home-produced publications.

They flourished and sank without leaving a trace, most of them failing to become established. Later, partisan media emerged, which, ‘...appealing mostly to [audiences]... who already agreed with the political position advocated... eventually became big business, and government printing contracts...[so that] partisan publications became a regular part of the spoils system’ (Dautrich & Yalof, 2009: 263).

The quotation from a conversation with Chomsky, cited at the start of this chapter, ‘If you ask me, the New York Times is factional’ (Chomsky in conversation, 20 November 2011), does not imply that factionalism in the PBC/PSC and ASC can be compared with factional forms of content and expression in media outlets like Fox News and MSNBC in the US. Of course, Satellite TV stations like Fox News have their own political bias, one that supports Republican agendas. Meanwhile MSNBC and other ‘cable’ networks tend to support the Democratic Party (Terwilleger and McCarthy, 2011). Perhaps if the PSC and ASC could be described as ‘factional’, MSNBC or FOX might be viewed as ‘partisan’. If it helped the Fox brand in its search for commercial viability to become Democrat, then it would find the means to change its political line. Since Fox News seeks commercial viability first and foremost, it is not strictly personal or factional. Factionalism is evident for the PSC and ASC, however, as ‘switching sides’ would simply not be an option. This too explains why it is important and interesting to consider the problem of defactionalisation in their case.

There are also some similarities between partisan media and factional media. Both share the characteristic of inspiring loyalty among staff. Even without overt controls, such loyalty can result in a relatively unified set of media messages. For factional, but not partisan media, loyalty can even reduce news and programme production costs. Exploitative relations and poor working conditions are part and parcel of factional media situations, where strong political affiliations may lead journalists and others to accept lower pay than would otherwise be the case, since they are working for a cause they believe in and for leaders who inspire them (Sutter, 2001). In both cases, media ownership is generally related to political parties and their top leaders, often to one single individual. However, in factional media, this loyalty is not strategic or commercially-based; it is mainly personal (Dautrich & Yalof, 2009). In factional media settings, journalists and producers not only toe the party line; they also

need to consider the personal views and interests of specific dominant leaders, able to define *personally* what factional interests are.

By contrast, unlike the argument of Chomsky cited at the start of this chapter and unlike CNN's relationship with the Democrats, the ASC is actually an integral part of Hamas; it cannot ever stop being Hamas. The ASC openly promotes Hamas military wing agendas and values, and even carries commercials promoting the activities of Hamas' military wing (Field notes, 2013). The same applies to the PSC, which reinforces the image of the National Guard and of Preventive Security, all security forces led by Fatah leaders (Sienkiewicz, 2012). This heavy sense of political commitment and overt, unapologetic bias is largely missing in the partisan media of the Fox News type. This type of media can be seen as a form of 'lightly' affiliated media, not owned outright by a political party, but leading from behind, through general affiliation, as it were, rather than on the basis of the unquestionable loyalty and devotion that characterises factional media (Levendusky, 2013b). Scholars describe partisan media stories as 'framed, spun, and slanted so that certain political agendas are advanced' (Jamieson et al 2007: 26). In contrast, in factional media stories are not just slanted, but are virtually indistinguishable from the official positions of the faction's top leadership.

More recent work on factions by Boucek helps to make the point that factions have been defined in many different ways over time in different contexts (Boucek, 2009). The definition of a faction in the Palestinian media context, as used in this study, comes closest to the definition of earlier thinkers like Hume, Burke and V.O. Key, for whom factions are equated to 'political machines' serving mostly personal interests (Boucek, 2009: 459; Boucek, 2012; Benedict, 1985). Taking into account these various elements of a definition, for this study, factional media will be defined as the situation where a group based around personal ambitions and ideological goals:

- a. conceptualises its audience as groups and individuals who approve of one political faction's dominant positions;
- b. is overt in its privileging of narrow and even individual factional interests over the wider interests of the general public (economic, social, political interests);

- c. is funded primarily by competing political, as opposed to corporate or governmental, sources, and
- d. vilifies competing faction(s) as a means to gain support for its own leadership's positions.

Among scholars working on factions within parties, few would use this specific definition, which is tailored to the particular context of media in Palestine. Factionalism is recognised by its distinctive features, in which the press and other media as actors are seeking to narrowly control public opinion, to shore up support for an individual and his faction, whilst attacking the integrity of the competing faction or factions (Boucek, 2009; Boucek, 2012).

3.3 Theorising Defactionalisation and 'Palestinianism'

A crucial problem is where to locate the production of meaning and ideology in the mass communication processes, and how to characterise processes of agency and interpretation, in this case organised around factions, or not as the case may be (Hallin and Mancini, 2012; Sienkiewicz, 2012; Tawil-Souri, 2011). In Marxist and critical theory, the power of the media has been related to how media messages serve the interests of specific groups, political factions or economic and class interests. Power relations between Hamas and Fatah and their supporters and media audiences linked to them are not the main focus of this study, however. Instead, the focus is on ways in which the Hamas and Fatah-related media – and especially satellite TV channels – represent reality to either build political and cultural consensus (Khalaf, 2008) or in order to undermine such consensus (Khalaf, 2008). This is likely to be true of cultural and children's programming as well as of the news.

Reversing or limiting factionalism may require restoring 'the role of media events in integrating society, affirming...common values, legitimating its institutions, and reconciling different sectional elements' (Curran and Liebes, 1998: 4). Seeing the media as part of wider efforts to restore hope implies that the media can play a constructive role in de-escalating violent conflicts by communicating messages and themes that cut across, for instance, different sectors of Palestinian society. In relation to the Hamas-Fatah conflict, it is vital to flesh out an understanding of their use of the media. To do this, the study seeks to

‘place the media within wider social, economic and political settings’ (Keeble, 1997: 2). Of course, no local context can be studied in isolation in the present era. Globally, there are many other contexts in which the concepts of factional journalism and media ‘factionalism’ or ‘defactionalisation’ could apply, as the opening quotations from Chomsky at the start of this chapter suggest. Not only in obvious war or post-war areas do warring factions attempt to control the details of reporting in the press. In ‘advanced democracies’ too, media control can take on perhaps subtler, but also quite ‘factionalised’ forms. In both Hamas and Fatah media, factionalism tends to find expression through:

‘...selection of topics, distribution of concerns, framing of issues, filtering of information, emphasis and tone, and by keeping debate within the bounds of acceptable premises’ (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: 298; Hjarvard, 2003).

As Greenfield (2014) noted in *Mind and Media: The Effects of Television, Video Games, and Computers*, TV has a powerful effect and tends to take over time, attention, and the cognitive development of children and young people. Its influence in shaping children’s habits and expectations makes it a powerful medium for shaping future citizens. Media influences need to be understood in specific settings, but unlike in most media research, the influence of media on audiences is not the main focus of this study. Instead, this study focusses on the ‘supply side’, looking at the production process and at the content. This supply side (i.e., content and production) is important because it enables us to zoom in on how television representations of reality relate to wider debates and developments in Palestinian society around a set of key themes, as already described in Chapter 1.

When we seek to understand how media content is produced in a latent conflict situation, where there has been violence and not just a ‘war of words’ between different factions, we might reasonably hope that ‘defactionalisation’ would follow after the end of violence. In this chapter, ‘defactionalisation’ is introduced and theorised as a central concept used in the study, to express how even factional media may reflect wider trends to avoid the logic of factionalism, and in the case of ASC and PSC, to overcome the legacies of violent factionalism that arose especially in 2006-2008, between Fatah and Hamas.

Analysing media producers' positions, the degree of their polarisation or convergence in content, involves the identified themes, their presence or absence in the different episodes of each programme during the selected study period. Thematic content analysis of this type is an established means of making sense of TV production values and is presented in Chapter 6 and 7 in relation to children's programmes and cultural programs respectively (Thawabteh, 2010). In Chapter 8 an emerging sense of 'Palestinianism' is detected in ASC and PSC programmes, indicating a likely less factionalised media future in Palestine. As argued by Yezid Sayigh, interviewed by Dina Matar (2010), factional media has largely been forced on Palestinians, who because they find themselves politically and socially isolated, are forced to make choices about which political groups to follow and be loyal towards.

Defactionalisation implies de-emphasising inter- and intra-party conflicts and ending mediatised appeals that reinforce divisive sub-national identities and agendas. In a nutshell, moving beyond factionalism is termed defactionalisation in this study. This notion conveys the idea that complicated internal conflicts can be overcome by focussing on non-divisive in relation to the programme content of media outlets which represent competing factions. The following chapters will show that when themes are explored and illustrated using content analysis, and when producers reflect on their choices and constraints, it becomes evident that both the ASC and the PSC are moving beyond factional media agendas in their cultural and children's programmes, both in terms of contents and in terms of production values.

Palestinianism (Matar, 2010) is examined more closely in Chapter 8, and may appear to result from defactionalisation. It also represents a renewal of Islamic rhetoric, however, and a departure from secular nationalism of the PLO variety, for instance. Palestinianism as a new form of nationalism thus poses renewed challenges to the Israeli occupation of Palestine, and does so from a broadly religious perspective informed by strands of political Islamist ideology. Edward Said (1994:4) used the term 'Palestinianism' to refer to the motivating ideology of the Palestinian resistance movement in the 1970s. He marks this period as a fresh beginning for Palestinians, stating 'Palestinianism, then, is an effort at repatriation... a transition from being in exile to becoming a Palestinian once again.' Similarly, in this study, the term Palestinianism is

associated with the Palestinian National Movement, involving a transition from faction-oriented media to a more pan-Palestinian form of media.

Less factional media content may also mean less ‘security’-oriented media, enhancing a sense of being opposed to whatever comes from Israel as occupying power. A renewed sense of this common cause can quite clearly be seen emerging in the Palestinian satellite TV stations, ASC and PSC. This was evident both in interviews conducted for this study, and in the content of children’s and cultural TV programmes broadcast by ASC and PSC during the the period under review.

3.4 Comparing Different Approaches to Analysing Media Content and Production

In *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, Herman and Chomsky (1988) adopt a political-economic approach, similar to that of some other scholars in the field (McChesney, 2008; Durham and Kellner, 2001). The approach adopted in this study can be distinguished from a political economy approach, in which money or capital are taken to be the key and the ultimate determinants of the media’s content, factionalised or not. The approach in this study can also be distinguished from a ‘media effects’ approach, in which viewers are seen as ‘impacted’ by media in various ways. Instead, this study considers various layers of power relations, and acknowledges agency at all levels, particularly at the level of media creators and producers.

Whilst certainly limited by economic and political constraints, nonetheless they have real creative choices and make decisions during the production process that can move the media beyond and away from factional agendas. An appealing aspect of a Gramscian approach is that it provides a way of thinking about economic power and dominance without losing sight of the role played by the human agency of the dominated and oppressed.

3.4.1 Theorising Media Compromises

In my position as a ‘scholar-practitioner,’ (Mayer, 2009) observing fellow media professionals, I have noticed one key feature that begs further explanation, beyond the historical account given in Chapter 2. This is the tendency, already noted, of many working in the media in Palestine to

make compromises and engage in self-censorship. My experience of many years of work in the media in Gaza is that the militarisation of Hamas and of Fatah creates subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle forms of intimidation, which can translate as pressure on journalists and producers, including those who work for ASC and PSC, to avoid expressing certain views considered hostile to the ideas or agendas of the dominant faction. This can lead media professionals to keep their opinions private, to prefer silence rather than open expression, and to carefully avoid explicit disagreements. Staff are not easily open about these constraints, and often compromise so that they can maintain trust but still negotiate over content and how it is framed (Allen, 2013).

Under such conditions, self-censorship and compromises with political faction positions can be noticed by someone familiar with the context, and this can constrain the ability of media professionals to control the pace of media 'defactionalisation' in relation to thematic content and production values. 'Defactionalisation', which reverses factionalism, does become easier once violent clashes between Hamas and Fatah give way to latent and non-violent form of inter-factional competition instead. After lethal clashes in 2007-2008, the situation started to improve in 2009-10, which is the period this study focusses on.

Without adopting the orthodox Marxist position that media simply 'reflects' the material interests of dominant capitalists, a Gramscian understanding of power relations helps to analyse the practices and politics of media compromise. Media producers decide to give in at certain points on some of their preferred themes, in order to secure wider audience appeal, rather than preach to the converted alone. Being prepared to compromise, and move away from factional agendas, and to promote defactionalisation is a significant process that this study seeks to identify and theorise. Such a move towards making compromises:

‘...helps the progressive force to triumph, albeit with its victory tempered by certain compromises and limitations. It is reactionary when its intervention helps the reactionary force to triumph – in this case too with certain compromises and limitations, which have, however, a different value, extent, and significance than in the former’ (Gramsci, 1992: 464-465).

Inspired by such insights about media practices, Stuart Hall, in a well-known article, 'Encoding/Decoding,' has argued that producers cannot

fully control the final meaning of what they produce (Hall, 2010). When ‘...the viewer takes the connoted meaning from, say, a television newscast or current affairs programme... and decodes the message...we might say that the viewer is operating inside the dominant code’ or frame of reference (Hall, 2010: 570). D’Acci has taken further this idea that the consumer plays an active part in making meaning from a given media text, and has detailed the variety of factors that complicate, although not completely negate, the ability of media producers to impart intended messages to audiences (D’Acci, 2004). Domination can coexist with compromise, not in a way that reduces everything to the binary of resistance or consent, but instead in a way that involves shifting the balance of power relation. Gramsci refers to this as:

‘...spontaneous consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group [i.e. the producers of factional media]. This consent is ‘historically’ caused by the prestige [and factional ownership], which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production...[the] apparatus of state coercive power which ‘legally’ enforces discipline on those groups who do not ‘consent’ either actively or passively’ (Gramsci, 1971:145).

Of course, there will be strict financial limits to what content media can produce in both the PSC and ASC TV channels. There are also certain restrictions on what can be conveyed in terms of content on satellite TV. Restrictions on free expression and content are technical, legal, political and economic. For D’Acci’s ‘circuits of media’ approach, there are also restrictions on what audiences and sponsors will find acceptable in terms of content and messages, mediated through social norms and cultural values. D’Acci (2004) has thus demonstrated how specific elements in Taiwanese society ‘...have been understood and experienced by their incorporation as moments in various competing discourses’ in the Taiwanese media (D’Acci, 2004: 438). According to one study:

‘D’Acci’s study exemplified the argument that meaning can, in fact, never be guaranteed—neither in the construction of media texts nor in their reception; and it certainly cannot be read simply off of ownership structures...Rather, the entire circuit of production is one of constant ideological negotiation and discursive struggle in the attempt to frame

representations within a specific socio-historical context' (Havens et al., 2009: 243).

The relevance of considering the concept of hegemony in analysis of media production and thematic content is that it can help explain why media cannot simply force ideas down viewers' throats. Instead, once there is competition, as in satellite TV, media producers have to make compromises if they are to appeal to wider audiences. The 'circuits of media' of d'Acci itself draws on a Gramscian notion of hegemony. This approach will be especially helpful for looking at processes of defactionalisation of content within specific children's and cultural programmes, and embedded within a structurally factional satellite TV media environment (D'Acci, 2004).

The different factors are said, according to the 'circuits of media' approach, to influence media producers, and can also help explain the many compromises producers in Palestine, whether in Gaza, the West Bank or elsewhere, are obliged to make on a daily basis, working within the world of Palestinian media.

D'Acci's is far from being the only 'circuits of media' approach, but it is one of the best-known and influential. Several other studies employ closely related concepts, like 'media circuits', as in Hall (1980), Johnson (1986/1987), Gough-Yates (2003) and Crewe (2003). D'Acci's model is used here because it takes into account several different factors involved in media production and appears as one of the more inclusive approaches. The same applies to Gans and to Gitlin and their theoretical perspectives, which are only two among a great many approaches to the analysis of media content. Whereas the approaches of Gans and Gitlin make explicit reference to external factors that can influence content, most other, related approaches do not say much about this dimension (Tuchman 1977; Fishman 1980; Weaver & Wilhoit, 1986b).

Hall already proposed the idea of a circuit or feedback loop between media producers and audiences, long before the internet revolution, and in this model, audiences and their expectations actively shape media content. Hall envisaged a media 'structure produced and sustained through the articulation of linked but distinctive moments - production, circulation, distribution/consumption and reproduction' (Hall, 1980: 117). This point has been made more recently by Shoemaker and Reese (1996), who also built on Herbert Gans's and Todd Gitlin's seminal

studies and insights (Gans, 1979; Gitlin, 1980). The more recent work of Marc Lynch (2006), *Voices of the New Arab Public: a discussion on Iraq, Al-Jazeera, and the Middle East Policy Today*, uses a similar approach, also grounded in a Gramscian framework. It is acknowledged in such studies that:

‘...the new Arab public is more than just Al Jazeera. It is defined by the rapidly expanding universe of Arabs able and willing to engage in public arguments about political issues within an ever-increasing range of possible media outlets... dozens of competing satellite television stations, independent newspapers, state-backed official media, and even on-line news sites. It comprises Islamic networks and mosques, NGOs and transnational organizations, and prominent public figures and intellectuals’ (Lynch, 2006: 21-22).

All three of the studies mentioned above look mostly at content, but also place this content within the wider context of how media is being produced. Similarly to such arguments, in this study too, the Palestinian public is understood as: ‘composed of multiple, overlapping publics that should be defined not territorially but in reference to a shared identity and a common set of political arguments and concerns’ (Lynch, 2006: 22).

Adopting a theoretical model that looks at media through the lens of struggles for hegemony, means that thematic media content needs to be analysed to show both how ideas are transmitted from producers to audiences, but also how different forces outside and inside the media influence both production choices, content and values expressed in the media. According to Gramsci (1992: 706-707), ‘(i)deology is identified as distinct from the structure, and it is asserted that it is not ideology that changes the structures but vice versa.’ It is hoped that this study can nonetheless offer deeper insights into how a structurally factional media can start to produce children’s and cultural programmes where both media content and production values appear to move beyond factionalism, and to become more defactionalised.

A Gramscian approach enables us to avoid falling into the trap of setting out the simple expectation – which may then tend to be fulfilled through a bias in data collection – that PSC simply transmits the views of Fatah, including in its children’s and cultural programmes, and that ASC does the same in relation to the views of Hamas. The main question to

be asked during content analysis is: what aspects don't seem 'typical' of Fatah or Hamas views, and why are they there? Of course, answering this question involves looking at how compromises are made in production values and in program content.

Making political, production-related and social-cultural compromises, TV producers cannot avoid being aware of the contextual environment of their own media production, whether they are producing news, cultural programmes or children's TV (Gitlin, 1980). Content analysis can be used to show how these compromises are expressed, and to suggest why certain decisions may or may not have been made, and why a different kind of content may have been avoided. Applying the notion of hegemony to Palestinian satellite media also makes it clear that media hegemony is always something 'piecemeal', and is never 'totalising or permanent' but subject to multiple on-going compromises, which constantly reshape and restructure the media over time (Gramsci, as cited in Hall, 1977: 339). [Hegemony as]

'...the "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is "historically" caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production' (Gramsci, 1971: 12).

As key constituent parts of the National Movement, this insight can apply to both Fatah and Hamas. The historical analysis in Chapter 2 already suggested this theoretical position, without theorising the compromises and negotiations that were revealed.

Let's illustrate the Gramscian approach by taking an example. The ASC might wish to go on air and transmit, through children's and cultural programmes, messages about being a devoted Muslim. However, this kind of message might not have the intended effect on viewers. This means that ASC may have to make compromises and negotiate this outcome in other ways than through directly instructing children and adults about what it means to be a 'good muslim.' This may be why ASC cultural and children's programmes do not explicitly insist that viewers should be devoted Muslims, nor express the view that they risk going to Hell if not. Such an approach might well be counter-productive.

Thus the ‘circuits of media,’ explored in the next section, is a Gramscian-inspired approach to media production, that goes beyond the individual agency or opinions of media producers themselves, and their own subjectivities. According to D’Acci:

‘Hegemony is the process by which various discourses in a social formation come to achieve positions of relative power in negotiations and struggle with other discourses. Cultural studies, for its part, is dedicated to analysing the operations of power’ (D’Acci, 2004: 434).

Along the circuit of different moments in the media circuit, from design through production and distribution, the individual and group reception of programming content complicates and influences how producers as individuals and as professionals, decide to communicate and frame specific political and cultural messages. Though producers may intend to serve the interest of a specific party or faction, for example, in producing a children’s programme or a cultural programme, the manner in which they actually present and edit the programme content will not be dictated by the faction in any direct way. Instead, thematic content and production values of specific TV programmes will result from a complex, discursive process of negotiation between producers, distributors and consumers (D’Acci, 2004). In Palestine, such processes of negotiation involve funders, political bosses, the Occupiers, and also constituencies not as often heard, such as women, youth and religious minorities.

3.4.2 Theorising ‘Circuits of Media’

The framework adopted for understanding what factors are involved in influencing media content in the ASC and PSC children’s and cultural programmes is derived from Julie D’Acci’s work. She introduced an integrated approach to media studies known as ‘circuits of media,’ which has proven especially useful for scholars working in the field of television studies within ethnography, cultural and media studies (D’Acci, 2004). Combined with this, the studies already mentioned by Gans (1980) and Gitlin (1980) are useful since they help to analyse media content (in their case, news content.) In this section, these approaches are introduced and justified in terms of how they work together to drive the theoretical and analytical framework of the rest of this study. Synthesising these approaches can help make sense of data collected and

collated from the selected ASC and PSC satellite TV programmes. Eventually, this will enable us to address the central research questions elaborated in the first chapter of this study.

Critical scholarly work focusing on the media industry has been expanding rapidly in the past few years. Like other studies (e.g., Johnson, 2013 and Haven et al., 2009), D'Acci's theoretical framework has been widely recognised in media analysis research. The 'circuits of media' model also draws on Johnson's earlier model (1986, 1987) of 'circuits of production and media studies', and is inspired by Hall's (1980) path-breaking encoding and decoding model for analysing media content. D'Acci's framework can be complemented by recent studies by Mayer and others in media production analysis (Mayer, 2009). As one study explains:

'Production studies gather empirical data about production: the complexity of routines and rituals, the routines of seemingly complex processes, the economic and political forces that shape roles, technologies, and the distribution of resources according to cultural and demographic differences' (Mayer, Banks and Caldwell, 2009: 4).

The approach adopted in the present study is intended to be flexible, reintroducing aspects of media production studies in order to encourage more multi-dimensional explorations of several interrelated aspects of the media cycle: media as cultural artifact; media as production and media as socio-historical context (D'Acci, 2004; Mayer, Banks and Caldwell, 2009). In using these three dimensions to examine the media production of the PSC and ASC, it is useful to point out that this 'circuits of media' model presents these dimensions as 'spheres with broken lines in order to represent porous and analytical rather than self-contained and fully constituted domains' (D'Acci, 2004: 431).

From this perspective, viability both involves producers seeking to gain wider acceptance among their audiences and - at the same time - keeping up the image of their channel as avoiding factionalism and as promoting national unity. And as Haven et al. expressed it, the meaning of text cannot simply be deduced from '...ownership structures and advertising interests. Rather, the entire circuit of production is one of constant ideological negotiation and discursive struggle in the attempt to frame representation within a specific socio-historical context' (Haven et

al, 2009: 243). Each of the three sites of production will now be examined in turn.

- (i) **The first site** is that of media as cultural artifact. Artifacts are taken as evidence of the messages media outlets try to convey to their audiences. Each distinguishes one television channel from another, and part of this difference will be easily measurable, especially when sound bites combine with visual images or videos, to demonstrate a particular set of popular cultural references. Among the most popular cultural artifacts are the Palestinian traditional dress, the Kuffiyeh, the Dome of the Rock, the national dance, or Dabka, and photos of Palestinian refugees from 1948, during the Nakba. Other symbols include the flag, the olive tree, traditional cookery and recipes, and kitchen and farming utensils. Non-visual artifacts can be harder to document. The use of music and songs, references to poetry, and to Palestinian folklore, and the use of metaphors in stories, as just some examples. To clarify this further, considering cultural artifacts as one of the contested sites of media production is a useful means of testing how culture informs what is produced, as mediated by technological and economic considerations. A cultural artifact might be ‘...evident in the formal dimensions of particular programmes; or it might focus on the reception and the various in-home technologies – capital as domestic goods – of viewers from different socioeconomic strata’ (D’Acci, 2004: 433-434). When examining the difference of themes between the relatively high-budget production of *Sesame Street* and the low-budget production of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the notion of shared cultural artifacts can explain why at times themes may overlap, and even look similar between these two otherwise quite contrasting programmes. Given political polarisation of party factions across Palestinian territories, when examining *Cultural Flashes*, *Burning Brands*, *Sesame Street* and *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, and looking at dominant factors shaping media content of these cultural and children’s shows, one might expect ideology to play a prominent role (Hallin and Mancini, 2012; Sienkiewicz, 2012; Tawil-Souri, 2011). However, surprisingly, later in this study this appears not to be the case.
- (ii) **The second site** in the circuit of media production in D’Acci’s framework (2004: 433) is conceptualised as ‘encompassing all

phases of the production’, and as ‘...the overall institutional context from which programming emerges and is regulated.’ To take just one example to illustrate the production process itself, as a site of media production, it was found that production teams in *Sesame Street* engaged in community-based ‘testing’ of their themes and characters. They organised meetings with the public, for example, going to schools to show them the programme episodes, each new season, using different voices, outfits and styles to gauge the reactions of children and assess their preferences. This involved coordination with both civil society organisations in the West Bank and the Ministry of Education in Ramallah. No outreach of this kind was found in the case of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, perhaps because ASC had a much tighter budget. However, the more restricted and ‘traditional’ presentation styles might also be an ideological choice, as it seemed to be preferred by ASC in both its cultural and children’s programming. In *Sesame Street*, the Palestinian production team responded to external constituents, as well as local audiences of children in Palestine (or at least West Bank). Experts from New York regularly ensured that the programme contents remained within global *Sesame Street* norms and standards. According to an interview with one of the *Sesame Street* producers, they needed to get approval at each stage of the production process. In filming, screening, reviewing and finally prior to transmission, the global editorial management in New York had the final say (Interview: Sayeigh, 2013). This brief ‘thick description’ of the production processes and styles in PSC and ASC Satellite TV programmes for children, already reveals how each has its own distinctive organisational culture and type of production process. These, in turn, will influence the content of the children’s programmes in the two Palestinian stations, as Chapter 5 and 6 will clearly show (D’Acci, 2004). PSC and ASC producers each face distinct social and institutional constraints and outlooks, which became more apparent as the actual production process was discussed with staff. After all, the processes of production involve constant ideological negotiations and ongoing discursive struggles between media practitioners and those who employ them, as well as with funders and audiences.

(iii) **The third site** is that of the socio-historical context. Conducting content analysis also means examining the political, social, and economic settings of a particular theme or type of content. The context of such themes or ideas, surrounding it in time and place, provides it with specific meaning, unlikely to come through in content when taken in isolation. While comparing children's and cultural programming of the PSC and ASC, this will offer us a sense of how unique/ordinary the presented programmes/ideas were. One of the strengths of the 'circuits of media' model is that it re-introduces some key insights from media industry studies, side-lined in media studies for some time by the tendency of most media scholars to focus on audience responses or on analysis of media discourses and language use. The 'circuits of media' concept thus refocuses attention on 'all phases of the production moment or the industry as the overall institutional context from which programming emerges and is regulated' (D'Acci, 2004: 433). Like D'Acci's work, this study is concerned with all phases of the production process, and places media production in its wider cultural, institutional and historical context (the latter in Chapter 2).

In analysing these three sites of media production in a connected way, the theoretical perspectives of *Deciding what's news* (Gans, 1979) and *The whole world is watching* (Gitlin, 1980) contribute to the analysis of the evolving shaping of media content. The research of Gans and of Gitlin pays close attention to individual media producers, their socialisation, the routines that exist within their organisational set-up, and the wider socio-cultural contexts of media production, including audiences and ideologies, in ways that overlap with the third element in D'Acci's circuits of media model.

Although conducted separately, the studies of Gans and Gitlin complement one another and present elements of a common framework. Their overlapping hierarchy of influences model is composed of five types of explanations, which have also been identified by other scholars who reviewed the field of content analysis in relation to news (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). The five ways of explaining how media content is formed will now be listed. Each set of explanations is briefly elaborated on in connection with the PSC and ASC. They are: the socialisation and attitudes of media workers; media organisation and

routines; social reality; influences of other social institutions and forces; ideological positions. Each of these is now considered in turn:

1. Firstly, content is influenced by the socialisation and attitudes of media workers. This is a ‘communication-centered’ approach where psychological factors influence single individuals involved in media production. Factors to consider include personal, professional and political attitudes, and how producers’ professional training can influence how they view the ‘norms’ of their social reality. In the case of PSC and ASC, we would need to understand the personal, professional and political attitudes of staff working on children’s and cultural programmes, by viewing them as firmly embedded in their particular upbringing and training. An example can be found in Sara, the main character of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* of ASC. Her personal experience includes having seen her home demolished by Israeli bulldozers as long ago as in 2003, when she was just eight years old. This experience influences how she performs in the show, and how she communicates her memories and thoughts as a child to other children (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013). Experiential influences emerge quite evidently also in the case of the presenter of the PSC’s *Cultural Flashes*. The education he received during a relatively ‘liberal’ training at a European university influences the social reality he constructs, which as one producer described it makes him: ‘a Palestinian poet who is ideology-free’ (Interview: Al Asfar, 2013). When he uses specific, agreed norms related to the training he received outside of the local culture, these norms permeate his programme, and are unlike the values of someone who might have experienced education at a local Islamic school, for instance.

2. Secondly, content is influenced by media organisation and routines. This dimension of the media production environment suggests that working practices, rules and unspoken habits of a specific TV station will affect how individuals work and how content selection is made. With regard to the format of programming, media channels have more or less centralised policies of content control. Some operate through an ‘inverted pyramid,’ which implies that the story is constructed from the point of view of producers or journalists (Shoemaker and Mayfield, 1987: 21). The ‘media organisation and routines’ type of explanation is useful in explaining PSC and ASC

producers' decisions. It can also help to explain editorial policies and political endorsements as they operate inside these organisations. Thus, this type of explanation can be used to explain why, for example, PSC producers might have a different editorial position from ASC producers with regard to selection of words and phrases used in children's programs, and the choice of guests. Patterns of ownership, terms of employment, and financial and content control would also fall under this second dimension.

3. **Thirdly, content reflects social reality.** This can appear quite naive, since it simply proposes that the content of programming reflects wider social realities beyond the media institutions. This apparently simple insight underpins a great deal of audience-based media research (originally by Gans, 1979 and Gitlin, 1980, and elaborated on by Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). If we take an example from PSC's cultural programming, in some cases, guests are invited to present poetry on nationalism and resistance, suggesting that the TV host is accommodating the tastes of his audience. However, demands by viewers who wish to interact with the programme are also expressed through sms's and telephone calls received during the programme. What this suggests, is that compromises are made between two sets of realities: those of media producers and the institutions they work in, and those of audiences who consume, or 'buy into,' the programme content. In fact, both PSC and ASC tend to view reality through the prism of compromises that aim to reconcile each station's editorial positions with the preferences of their viewers. Thus, this third dimension can be linked with the two previous ones, which pointed to routines and organisational influences on media content. In this research, certainly all these aspects of reality will be examined, in terms of how they influence media content and producers' and journalists' decisions.

4. **Fourthly, content is influenced by other social institutions and forces.** This approach moves beyond the power of the TV station and producers to assert that other factors like audience feedback, and economic and cultural forces, can decide the content of programming. This means producers have to respond to public demands in order to maintain and expand their audiences. In the case of factional media, the PSC and ASC are also dependent on aid and sponsors for their shows.

This poses an external factor of influence on the station, including economic and cultural forces, which help to determine content. The PSC, for example, often gets civil society organisations to sponsor some of the shows, on the condition that specific values and themes are promoted within the community. According to Arroyave (2012: 206), ‘Scholars have coined terms such as events and pseudo-events to highlight how external forces may impact news content.’ A pseudo-event, a term coined by Boorstin (1961), refers to ‘synthetic news,’ in other words: ‘...events that do not occur spontaneously but are planned with the purpose of getting media coverage’ (Arroyave, 2012: 206).

5. Fifthly, content is influenced by ideological positions, for example to maintain the status quo. As proposed by hegemonic understanding, media content is arguably influenced by the ideology of the owners, producers and other staff of the TV station. For those who wield economic influence and power, their specific interests can be transmitted in a way that appears political rather than simply self-interested, and this in turn can help ensure the status quo remains unchallenged. This insight can be usefully applied to all four TV programmes under scrutiny, to examine, for example, how a live TV presentation can be interrupted by a phone call from a Minister of Information watching the show, who expresses his (or her) dislike of the approach taken by programme staff. Whilst not common, this kind of influence on content was reported by some of the interviewees.

Later, in Chapters 6 and 7, the selected key content themes, including nationalism, resistance and religion, among others (as identified in Section 1.6), will be considered in detail within the content of the four selected media programmes. Factors external to the media environment also need to be understood, to appreciate how they too can shape media production decisions and themes. By looking outside of what is produced by the ASC and PSC media, we see how themes discussed in these media are shaped by developments elsewhere, including the relaxation of political tensions between Palestinian factions, a structural-level change which may influence producers to steer clear of overt factionalism in the content of programmes.

A socio-historical approach to media content forms the basis for Chapters 2 of this study, and of Chapter 5, where wider social institutions and the wider context of occupation are examined in terms of how they interact with media content. In this light, one particular reason for the defactionalisation stands out from all others, and will be explored: the 2008-9 war by Israel on Gaza. By means of content analysis, the study explores how, after this event, Palestinian producers started to react to popular demands for reform and for reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah supporters. In examining *Cultural Flashes*, *Burning Brands*, *Sesame Street* and *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, and looking at dominant factors that have shaped media content of these cultural and children's shows, we see more than the ideology of the two factions of which they form a part.

3.4.3 Combining 'Circuits of Media' and 'Factors Influencing Media Content'

An adapted variant of the 'circuits of media' framework of analysis is applied in this study to help understand various institutional factors influencing both the content of Palestinian TV in relation to children's and cultural programmes, and production values. Quantitative data starts to be interesting once it is analysed qualitatively, and this reinforces the need for the kind of mixed methodological approach adopted in this study. In response to a question about combining quantitative with qualitative data, Noam Chomsky noted: 'There is no contradiction; you're looking at problems from several perspectives, each of which yields some useful insights' (in conversation, 27 November 2015). This study starts with contextualization, and continues to quantitative content analysis, using specific themes for coding 88 episodes of the four selected programmes. The findings of this quantitative analysis were then presented to production staff during interviews, and formed the basis for detailed follow-up discussions with some of them. The mixed methodological approach was briefly justified in Chapter 1.

In later chapters (Chapters 4 and Chapter 8) this study deals with some key influences on content and production: technical reasons, competition, financial restrictions, and intimidation by security apparatuses. As will now be discussed, the Gitlin and Gans model of 'media influence factors' can fill some gaps in D'Acci's 'circuits of media' model.

By using elements of D'Acci (2004) on the one hand and of Gans (1979) and Gitlin (1980) on the other, and combining approaches arising from slightly different perspectives, the strongest elements in each theoretical framework can be combined to produce a synthetic analytical framework that underpins the present study. This is where D'Acci's approach is complementary to that of Gans and Gitlin and together they provide a good way of bridging media studies and cultural studies.

To further explain the selected combination of the two theoretical frameworks, it should be mentioned that a straight cultural studies approach would not be adequate to understand the ideologies, framings and principles of production behind both the PSC's and ASC's production. If, for example, the approach taken by Lynch (2006) were used for the analysis of ASC content, one would not be able to explain the Puppets of Haneen and Karim, Farfur and Nassour. In other words, a straightforward media studies approach, based on content analysis, could not explain how the selected children's and cultural programmes moved beyond factional agendas to include themes that 'defactionalised' the media. The more subtle messages conveyed around specific themes in children's and cultural programmes would not be as evident without the broader contextual element being central to the analysis.

3.5 Working with the Analytical Framework for Content Analysis

Placing thematic content analysis and analysis of the context of media production processes under a single overarching framework of the 'circuit of media' helps integrate various elements of this study. This relatively flexible and multi-directional approach can bridge the gap between cultural and media studies (Mankekar, 1999). Methodologically speaking, media content analysis is a well-established approach that has been in use since the 1920s and 1930s. It includes, but is not limited to, investigations of the content of TV news productions (McNamara, 2010). Since the early 1950s, studies based on content analysis have proliferated in the fields of mass communication and social studies. Scholars have studied soap operas, cinema and TV, and from the mid-1980s onwards, content analysis of different media formed an integral part of most Media Studies degrees. For example, in one study it was

found that content analysis formed part of 84% of the media studies courses at US universities (Neuendorf, 2002).

What is more important than the widespread use of this method of analysis, however, is how we gain access to the deeper meanings of the factors that help shape, for example, the content of children's and cultural programmes produced by the ASC and PSC. In relation to factional and defactionalised content, this research proposes a qualitative form of content analysis that looks at the selected programmes, studying the text closely to determine key moments and absences of themes that may demand further explanation. The study aims at understanding patterns of high, intermediate and low frequencies of theme occurrence. An example is the case of the PSC, linked to Fatah, which would normally not be expected to talk about religion as much as the ASC, linked to Hamas. However, a quantitative media content analysis carried out on programmes of both the ASC and PSC showed precisely the opposite of what was expected. Religion was significantly more present in PSC programmes than in ASC programmes. Although ostensibly a nationalist, secularist channel, the PSC was found to have more explicit religious content in its programmes, or at least in its cultural programme, than the ASC, which is closely related to Hamas. This observation begs for some specific explanation, and some of these surprising – and not so surprising – findings from the thematic content analysis are the main focus of Chapters 6 and 7.

As explained in Chapter 1, content analysis was considered the most appropriate method for analysing factional media. A total of 10 months of broadcasts of cultural and children's programmes, i.e., of *Burning Brands*, *Cultural Flashbes*, *Sesame Street*, and *Pioneers of Tomorrow* (40 episodes for each programme x 4 programmes = 160 hours in total), were aired in the selected period of March 2009 - January 2010. All programme-series were on air during the field study period in 2012-13, with the exception of *Sesame Street* for which US funding had been halted before fieldwork began. The name *Burning Brands* changed in 2014 to *Zoom In*, but the overall goals of the programme remained the same, despite a widened focus on regional intellectual issues.

Whilst quantitative thematic analysis of content is fairly standard, there are no agreed guidelines or standard methods for qualitative analysis of content, and the delicate task of making sense of data collected through viewing programme episodes (Polit & Beck 2004).

Quantitative analysis is easier to conduct, but provides a less nuanced result than qualitative analysis. Originally designed from studies by scholars like Denzin and Lincoln (1994), Mayring (2000), Robson (1993), Silverman (1993), and Miles and Huberman (1994), quantitative media content analysis methods vary from one study to another, depending on the skills and analytical abilities of the researcher (Hoskins and O'Loughlin, 2010; Hoskins, 2004). A quantitative approach is limited in its flexibility, since at the start the researcher needs to decide on the most convenient categories around which to analyse content thematically (Weber 1990; Polit & Beck 2004). Elements of the quantitative approach, in the form of tables resulting from analysis of content, are included in this study (for full details see the tables, arranged by program, in Appendix 6). However, more significant is the qualitative analysis used to make sense of and contextualise these numerical measurements, which are only a starting point for the present research.

The researcher's priority was to identify a qualitative content analysis approach that could yield rich insights, using the selected examples and over the course of the research period. For this purpose, Miles and Huberman (1994) presented an excellent, if not the only relevant, model for understanding the patterns of factional media's production of cultural and children's programmes. This model involves the application of three techniques (Miles and Huberman, 1994:29):

1. selecting apparently typical/representative examples;
2. selecting negative/disconfirming examples;
3. selecting exceptional or discrepant examples.

The selected examples of qualitative content analysis as applied by Miles and Huberman (1994) are used mainly to identify the boundaries of the ASC and PSC satellite TV programme episodes, and to explore the views reflected in the content. The identification of discordant and extreme tendencies in the content of the four programmes offered a useful way into the examination of typical, expected and exceptional patterns in the findings related to media content, something that could be linked to factionalism and evidence of defactionalisation.

In a review, useful at that time, Miles and Huberman (1994) compiled a techniques guide book based on a review of the work of 126 researchers in the field. Since its publication, their synthesis has become

a classic discussion of how to manage data collection during fieldwork. An added benefit of qualitative research is that it can yield empirical data that has ‘generalisability’ (McNamara, 2010; 15). By using sampling procedures, a synthetic or mixed-method approach also makes it possible to explore discourses at various stages in the media production process, widening the range of possible ‘factional’ and ‘defactionalised’ patterns that can be identified.

In this way, quantitative and qualitative content analyses are combined to examine patterns, tendencies and exceptions that appear within the episodes of the four satellite TV programmes. This can generate further possible explanations of why certain characteristics appear in the way they do. Locating content analysis within D’Acci’s (2004) ‘circuits of media’ approach also reaffirms that, whilst ideology may shape cultural and children’s programming, especially for factional media, other factors, such as producers’ culture, market forces and new technologies, can counter factional influences, moving production and content away from factionalism and towards defactionalisation.

Content analysis was selected to examine elements within children’s and cultural programmes on satellite TV, elements that may not be wholly explained through the ideology of the faction or dominant organisation. For example, if a text is found in ASC’s children’s programme *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, in which children are urged to be good Muslims and support Islamic values, this does not require much explanation. It would simply represent the standard views of Hamas. If, however, the same show preaches that children need to establish a Palestinian nation, based on values that transcend religion, this is noteworthy and requires further exploration, since it suggests the influence of other factors besides the standard ideology of Hamas. Further examination might be needed to find out if children’s programmes on ASC consistently include themes not obviously in line with Hamas values. Similarly, one would question the factional nature of PSC production and content if an episode of one of their programmes raised doubts about the policies and practices of President Abbas. From within the ‘circuits of media’ theoretical framework it is possible to explain such deviations from factionalism. Perhaps, in order to compete with ASC, PSC producers need to appear less factional and ideological; they might attract a wider audience if they appear relatively independent from Hamas.

Combining quantitative with qualitative content analysis sheds more light on such compromises, and the need to explain them. If both PSC and ASC want to appeal to viewers beyond the constituencies of Fatah and Hamas, both are involved in the circuit of media, and they must compromise through give and take. Thus, in one case, in a satirical programme called *Ala'a Watar* (Country hanging by a thread) Amira Rishmawi, host of this PSC TV series, publicly challenges the statements of the Palestinian Authority and of Fatah. That she is allowed to do so may be to reassure the audience they are watching a critical show, and that PSC is not a one-sided, factional channel. Rishmawi's reputation for political critique means she will try not to disappoint the trust audiences place in her ability to send up the political authorities in this way (Sienkiewicz, 2012).

Content analysis of media necessarily involves the use of sampling procedures. Sampling is usually done in qualitative research with the aim of producing sound generalisations. For the research described here, it means that the findings and conclusions from representative samples of the selected TV programmes must be generalised. In terms of sampling, a much-used form of qualitative data analysis is the one proposed by Miles and Huberman. They suggest that a simplified format of a checklist is the most suitable form for a sampling exercise (Miles and Huberman 1994: 34). Applying these sampling criteria to cultural and children's programming within the Palestinian factional media has proven to be a useful exercise. Before the start of fieldwork in Gaza, it was agreed that sampling criteria should meet the following conditions:

1. The sampling strategies must match the theoretical framework as well as the research questions. This matching includes the presentation of cases in the form of categories that are relevant to the theoretical framework. A mixed approach, involving deductive principles and inductive understanding was proposed, and was to be used in case of factional media where the factional or non-factional (defactionalised) thematic content had not been researched in depth, but only in a fragmentary way.
2. The selected sample needed to be more or less representative of the phenomenon of factional media. As proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994: 34), this should be part of ensuring that the researcher's observations enhance generalizability of the findings

of analysis. For this purpose, 88 of the total of 160 episodes were selected for closer analysis.

3. 'Thick description,' a term coined by anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973), is also important to help produce more in-depth analysis of the quantitative measures that arise from looking at content, to go beyond observable external events, to include various meanings given by people to such events.
4. Analytical generalisability is more important in this type of research, than statistical generalizability based on quantitative data.
5. Samples should produce credible descriptions of media production and further justifications that are recognizable in actual life; in other words, accounts of media content should be convincing to those familiar with the context.
6. Sample strategies should be ethical. Miles and Huberman argue that the researcher should assess whether the methods/sampling selected imply risks or benefits for the study groups. This researcher considers similar issues of ethics that are described below and were already introduced in Section 1.7 of Chapter 1.

To sum up, the content analysis was organised by noting all the themes identified and defined in Chapter 1, seeing when they appear and looking closely at the narrative/text, imagery and context in which they appear. Breaks in the same episode were included as they often related to the topic of the episode. For example, the ASC showed text stating "we will return" (POT20), with an image of militants of Al Qassam Brigades, the military wing of the Islamic Movement of Hamas. Each episode of the programmes viewed was broken down into individual scenes and these scenes were observed more than once, to check whether the first observation had been accurate. In this way, patterns and comparisons obtained are not only quantitative but also qualitative. Parallels and contrasts were noted between the ASC and PSC programmes and among and within episodes of single programmes. Next, discrepancies, patterns and absences that needed further explanations were identified. These explanations are provided – in detail – in Chapters 6 and 7. To give an example, when it is said 'Allahu Akbar' (God is Great), the expression is not taken as evidence of religion being a value, since it occurs so frequently in the speech of many Palestinians that it should not be interpreted as a religious expression as such.

To summarise, the content analysis section is organised in the same way as was done in several other studies on other contexts (Iraq, Al-Jazeera, Middle East Politics, and the Arab-Israeli conflict, in Lynch, 2006; Liebes, 1997; Wolfsfeld, 1997a). The first part outlines all the earlier mentioned themes found in the 4 programmes during the 10-months observation period. In total, 4 programmes x 40 episodes per programme x 1 hour per episode = 160 hours were aired. The second part outlines all the factors that were found to affect media content, including economic, political and external factors. The third part presents the analysis of the themes and how they relate to the factors that were found earlier. In the conclusion, analytical generalisation is used (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

As Table 3.1 shows, in the 88 programme episodes were randomly selected of the potential 160, just over half. These were all observed, and the key themes for content analysis: nationalism, religious values, citizens' rights and obligations, resistance, social, cultural, political and educational values, and entertainment, were all checked for. Table 3.1 shows that, whilst some expected themes did occur, some were quite infrequent and one did not appear at all. There is notably less presence of 'controversial' themes such as religious values and politics than of more 'consensual' themes, like social values, education and, especially, cultural values. This may be because cultural and children's programmes avoid 'controversial' issues, given that their audiences may prefer to confine politics to the news, or religious values to religious programmes.

However, it was remarkable that not only religious and political values, but also nationalism and resistance were minor themes in the overall content. This is not something one would expect, given the media environment outlined in Chapter 4. Indeed, the themes of nationalism, of resistance, and of citizens' rights, appeared in 10 per cent or less of episodes. Citizens' rights and obligations, which had been expected to be a significant theme, did not occur at all in any of the four programmes. Interestingly, educational values, a distinctly depoliticised theme, appeared in almost half of all episodes overall.

Table 3.1
Content analysis by theme (all 88 episodes)

Theme Category		Yes*	No
Nationalism and National Discourse	Frequency	11	77
	Percent	12.5	87.5
Religious values	Frequency	7	81
	Percent	8	92
Citizens Rights and Obligations	Frequency	-	88
	Percent	-	100
Resistance and Resistance Literature	Frequency	9	79
	Percent	10	90
Social values	Frequency	28	60
	Percent	32	68
Cultural values	Frequency	36	52
	Percent	41	59
Political values	Frequency	16	72
	Percent	18	82
Educational values	Frequency	43	45
	Percent	49	51
Entertainment	Frequency	34	54
	Percent	38.5	61.5

* - to the nearest 0.5 per cent

Themes for content analysis in this study can be defined operationally in the following ways (see also Appendix 3 for more detail).

- **Nationalism and national discourse:** refers to common Palestinian heritage, traditions and the identity of Palestinians, as connected to the collective entity of Palestine.
- **Religious values:** refers to observance of both Christian and Muslim or other religious rituals and ceremonies. The phrase 'religious values' does not refer to what is deemed good or unacceptable behaviour, or to usual blessings and greetings in Islam and Christianity, since these are in daily use for non-religious purposes as well.

- **Citizens rights and obligations:** refers to people's right to express themselves, including the right to organise, economic and social rights, the right to decent education and a dignified life.
- **Resistance and resistance literature:** refers to all values dealing with defending the self and family from Israeli military occupation, whether peacefully or using armed resistance, and including through economic boycott.
- **Social values:** all references to social relationships, especially to friendship, loyalty, thrift, family structure, neighbourly relations and community reciprocity. Attitudes towards authority and order are included in social values.
- **Cultural values:** references to the whole of Palestinian history, culture, tradition, symbolism and everyday norms of cultural practice. Note that this is close to the use of the term 'cultural artifacts' in D'Acci's framework.
- **Political values:** focus on questions of state authority, law and formal public institutions. There is overlap here with citizens rights, since political values extend to groups like refugees, prisoners, those indefinitely detained and those facing house demolitions, arrests, torture.
- **Educational values:** includes all values focusing on school and even pre-school learning about language, numbers, classical and colloquial Arabic, life skills, social behavior and peer-group relations, whether taught in a serious or in a more entertaining way.
- **Entertainment:** an enjoyable atmosphere of entertainment and relaxation for children, consisting of songs, games, crossword puzzles, books, vocabulary games and stories, outdoor play, and even pets (see Appendix 1, used to design the content analysis table with field supervisors in 2013).

The selected themes defined here, and first presented in Chapter 1, can be broken down into categories and frequencies as in Table 3.1, which covers all four programmes, and shows the average incidence of each value during the research period of March 2009 to January 2010. All these themes were used for identifying the content of cultural and children's programmes. It was challenging to consider these themes in relation to both children's programmes and cultural programmes. For instance, identifying educational values as a theme in cultural programmes was much harder than in the more obvious thematic educational content of children's programmes.

Themes of nationalism appear with a quite similar frequency, varying between 9 and 17 percent, for the ASC and the PSC, respectively, in their children's programmes (see Tables 10 and 28 in Appendix 6), compared with just 10 percent overall for all 4 programmes as shown in Table 3.1. This suggests that, at least during the selected research period, producers were more willing to include an element of nationalist rhetoric in children's programming than in cultural programmes, a surprising finding perhaps. As far as religious values in children's programmes are concerned, it was not that surprising to find that *Pioneers of Tomorrow* had a significantly higher occurrence of religious values than *Sesame Street*, where religion was mentioned in only one episode. Thus, the occurrence of religious values varied from just over 30 percent for *Pioneers* to just 4 percent of *Sesame* episodes. The way in which the themes were coded had been checked by two other researchers, just to avoid confusion. It might be perceived as controversial, but the principle of coding was that religious values were identified as a theme of content even if there was no direct quotation from a religious text or from discussions around existence and spirituality. Two of the media producers interviewed explicitly requested to see the coding used for 'religious' values in the content analysis. They wanted to verify whether the researcher and they themselves, as media producers, were interpreting religious values in the same way. In the end, the same definitions were shared by both sides.

3.6 Conclusion

In order to understand media production cultures, and to analyse programme content, a synthesis of relevant academic knowledge about

production modes and media environments has been seen as essential to this study. The aim of this chapter has been to contribute in filling a void at the conceptual level regarding media factionalism and how media content and production may shift away from factionalism. With regard to understanding media cultures and the historical significance of various forms of media content, however, it has also been stressed that no theoretical synthesis will be adequate for a full understanding. Only by getting out of the library and into the screen-rooms and directly into the field, to analyse content, interact with media producers, and test out academic knowledge about media production and content, i.e., analyse the way the media works in its proper context, will the researcher be able to get meaningful results.

4

The Palestinian Media's Working Environment

'After all, we cannot just be dopey, we have to adjust to people's needs in order to make sure people take us seriously' (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013).

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will reflect on the professional context of the Palestinian media, providing a general understanding of the media environment and the factors that influence and constrain performance of media producers in such an environment. Along with Chapter 8, this chapter seeks to address the first main research question: 1. *What political, social and other contextual factors influence the day-to-day decisions of producers of these programmes, and how do they communicate through media in a 'factional' or 'defactionalised' way?* A set of factors is elaborated that pose constraints on the choices open to Palestinian media professionals in general and those in satellite TV in particular. This chapter starts by identifying a number of criteria for assessing media freedoms and capacities.

The discussion will also consider how forms of cultural and political power influence the production environment of satellite media TV in Palestine. The impact of Israeli occupation on the daily life of Palestinian journalists includes constant threats and frequent disappearances, frequent violent arrests, torture and periods of imprisonment. In some cases, these continuous pressures have resulted in exile (Daraghmeh, 2003).

The psychological pressures on individual journalists are aggravated by economic despondency and the overarching constraints imposed by the Israeli blockade and occupation of Gaza, and by repression in the

West Bank and Jerusalem. Constraints are imposed by the security apparatuses of the respective Palestinian authorities as well, operating as they do in Gaza and the West Bank. The role of Hamas and Fatah own security apparatus will be returned to later, and will be explained.

4.2 The Media Working Environment

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has stressed since the 1940s that media workers, like other types of workers and professionals, need to be able to carry out their tasks under conditions that provide adequate opportunities for training and reasonable levels of remuneration (ILO, 2014). Moreover, the ILO stresses the need for security of employment, to avoid situations where political authorities, like factions, or even commercial interests, can exploit the professional and personal vulnerabilities of journalists through paying for the writing of articles that favour their (i.e. the dominant parties') interests. From a labour rights perspective, the freedom of the media, based on respect for truth and human dignity, depends on reasonable working conditions for journalists. Instead, a 'social network approach of Palestinian public relations' is very apparent, as in the media of Hamas, for example, and the role it plays during elections in getting out the voters (Zaharna et al, 2009: 238).

Most research suggests that decisions and views of media professionals in Palestine can be comprehended only when the wider political, cultural and psychological circumstances of Palestinian society are appreciated and understood (Al Turk, 2008; Al-Omari, 2010; Jamal, 2000). Media professionals are, after all, simply human beings, and are affected by the environment they live in and by their general situation in daily life. Some media producers' ideas reflect a wider reality, which is delivered to the public through images and sound bites that reflect personal experience, and that are based on cultural attitudes that may (or may not) be shared by their audiences. His or her level of education and training, political affiliations and religious faith, can all play an important role in shaping a media professional's point of view. To take just one example, according to the presenter and producer of the ASC's *Burning Brands*:

'...we tend to avoid introducing topics that harm religion or morality, and [tend] not to invite a guest who is not acceptable morally and religiously,

and not to bring in topics that could hit the unity of Muslims, Arabs or advance sectarianism' (Interview: Abu Jarad, presenter and producer, *Burning Brands*, 2013).

This perspective certainly plays a role in shaping the production process. What the interview with Abu Jarad made clear was that the type of education he had had at the Islamic University meant that his thinking was already geared towards a fairly narrow social network of mainly Islamic poets and writers, and that they, in turn, played a crucial role in shaping his understanding of what was 'appropriate' in terms of ASC content. Abu Jarad's statement reflects a dominant strand of thinking in Gaza, and his comments would be very differently received by audiences in the West Bank, for example.

4.3 Socio-Historical Contexts of Media Production

Even when such debates and controversies are not represented in the media, they affect the production process. This also applies to the four selected programmes analysed in this study. According to Abu Shammalah, who works as a field-producer and soundman for *Cultural Flashes* of the PSC:

'In most situations our on the ground production was never derived from news production... we received clear instructions from the management of the programme to focus on purely cultural issues which were not represented in media, but in community debates – for example in traditional medication using honey is a common remedy used by people – we had to bring this as it happened in the community, although it was invisible in media discourse' (Interview with Abu Shammalah: 2013).

As far as social values are concerned, women's rights groups too began to mobilise through their social networks. Discussing specifically Palestinian social values became more popular among NGOs, and these discussions started first within women's groups affiliated to the Women's Affairs Centre. One study by a women's group suggests that domestic and gender violence both increased during the period of factional conflict and the war on Gaza by Israel, and that child poverty had also increased dramatically (Shamon, 2009). Not surprisingly, given the intensity of violence and occupation, children and Palestinian society in general have been observed to have an increasing number of social and behavioural problems following the war, with a negative impact on the

lives of human beings, women and children in particular (Shamon, 2009). An increasing rate of divorce was noted by women's groups as a sign that women's relationships with their husbands had worsened because of the political division and the military confrontation. This created additional, longer-term problems for Palestinian children besides the usual obstacles of living as a child under occupation (Arts, 2012). The context of constant sleeplessness, anxiety and trauma from violence, may explain some of the educational difficulties children have been experiencing from 2008 onwards (Shamon, 2009).

Once again, as with educational debates, this debate about family violence and poverty did not begin in the media. It arose among the Palestinian public (Llosa, 2012), in response to a perceived increase in incidents of family violence, as well as to a rising number of males migrating abroad to find work after the war and leaving their families behind, isolated and exposed to poverty. These signs of deteriorating and damaged social relations and values were barely addressed in the ASC – or PSC – in discourses of the selected satellite TV programmes.

In relation to children's educational difficulties, a large part of this discussion came out of human rights groups, and revolved around the national education curriculum. Once again, the content of the four programmes selected did not reflect these debates during the study period (2009-2010). The PSC and ASC, in general, were not reflecting the debates going on in the local environment. Yet, media programmes cannot operate in a vacuum. Satellite TV channels may decide to control which topics should be discussed and debated in their programmes, but if over time they fail to reflect on widespread public concerns and discourses, they risk losing touch with, and losing, their viewers.

4.4 Media in Palestine: External Constraints

Other external constraints are crucial in this discussion of satellite TV programmes in Palestine, and can be seen as part of one of the sites of D'Acci (2004), namely the 'socio-historical context,' which was introduced in Chapter 3. Closer analysis of cultural and children's programming will help reveal how media professionals and producers perform their work under the current *status quo*. First, it is useful to highlight some external constraints and influences that may not be evident from content analysis and interviews. These 'behind the scenes'

factors are largely taken for granted by those who work in the Palestinian media environment, whether in Gaza or the West Bank. Whereas Palestinian media producers and journalists and others producing programming inside Israel face a different set of influences and constraints, they cannot divorce themselves from the Occupation.

This part of the chapter introduces some key external influences and constraints on Palestinian media professionals, including the Occupation, specific cultural values, and the problems caused by violence and insecurity following Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. Other relevant concerns are the status of Palestinian refugees, principles of human rights, including the right to return, and resistance to settlement expansion, as well as pervasive patterns of arrests, torture and disappearances. All these external factors, especially those resulting from the economic blockade, add to the already quite notable psychological and economic pressures on Palestinian media professionals. All these environmental issues play an important role in restricting the room for manoeuvre of Palestinian media professionals, forcing them to come up with more creative and innovative forms of media expression and content, within the strictly constrained environments in which they are working.

4.4.1 Occupation: economic consequences

Whatever moves towards peace there have been in the recent past, with negotiations and agreements, the continuous reinforcement of Israeli state controls and army occupation has not faltered or been reversed. The gradual, progressive and intended loss of the Palestinians' control over their own natural resources has continued apace, leaving Palestinians deprived of essential and inalienable rights to aquifers, streams, wells, agricultural land and roads (Gordon, 2008). Resources taken over by Jewish settlements and outposts built on Palestinian land confine Palestinians to the least desirable land. Israeli settlements have access to high ground water; Palestinians do not (Finkelstein, 1995). It is not only in the domain of natural resources that Occupation makes its mark, however.

In this study, power is understood as the ability to dictate agendas and decide which issues should be talked about, especially in relation to media production (Sienkiewicz, 2012). In Palestine, the power of media is always conditioned by the power of the Occupation, as well as by

differing degrees of factionalism and defactionalisation of Palestinian media outlets themselves. In this way, the ability of satellite media to exercise its influence, and to project power, is shaped by its relationship to the socio-economic and political-cultural systems within which it functions, and which therefore need to be outlined in more detail (Sienkiewicz, 2012; Zaharna et al, 2009; Jamal, 2000).

Since the start of the Israeli occupation, the main discussion in the Israeli press around the economy of the occupied territories (Gordon, 2008) has centred on two sets of debates. The first relates to the need to merge the Palestinian economy with Israel's economy, so as to support Israeli producers' access to the Palestinian consumer market. The second set of debates involves measuring Jewish Israeli settlement in the Palestinian occupied territories, with a focus on mapping specific areas economically and militarily occupied by the settlers, whether settlement in these areas is officially approved or not (Al Turk, 2008).

The overall goal is for Israel to control the Palestinian society and render it 'safe' by both economic and ideological means. Of course, the Palestinian media too are strangulated by the economic strategy of Israel, which in turn worsens the state of the Palestinian economy itself, on which the ASC, and to some extent the PSC, depend for their investments and budgets, in addition to the funds they receive from donors, which may be quite unpredictable.

The situation is worsened by the strategy of the Israeli authorities to regulate and control, through their dominant economic relationships with the West Bank and Gaza Strip, any room for manoeuvre of the local political institutions, of media outlets based in the territories, and of producers, journalists and other media staff (Abuzanouna, 2012). The constant disruption of the Palestinian economy and its productive base creates disruption for the 'circuits of media' in Gaza and the West Bank as well. This gives the Israeli state and economy a complete chokehold on the occupied populations through economic and military means of dominance.

Strangulating the independent Palestinian economy, through land seizures, border controls, lethal military actions and destruction of infrastructure, especially in Gaza, has not prevented Israel's economy from growing more industrially and technologically advanced as cheap labour sources have been replaced with hi-tech industries. Any capacity

for competition from Palestinians and Arabs, generally, has been pre-empted and nipped in the bud (Sienkiewicz, 2012; Gordon, 2008).

In addition, trade restrictions have result in the enforced dependence of all Palestinians, including those who invest in local industry, farming and in the media, on Israel. Israel is the main source for raw materials, for funding, and for inputs and technical support of all kinds. The longer-term economic impacts of both refugee displacement, and of colonial Zionist settlements, have been well documented (Abuzanouna, 2015; Longo et al., 2014).

4.4.2 Occupation: arrests and the psychology of fear

Like some other media professionals around the world, Palestinian media professionals live in a kind of political and psychological pressure cooker. Production crew members, whether reporters, cameramen or make-up artists, can simply be arrested for doing their work. They may be abducted, or forcibly exiled, for no apparent reason other than that they are thought to make media material hostile to Israel, or just to 'set an example,' and deter others from working in the media.

Scores of journalists in Gaza and West Bank receive death threats, including by phone and sms. Regular attacks occur, even in daylight, on journalists, who have their laptops seized, files destroyed, images wiped clean, and cameras confiscated. Even if they are only suspected of publishing sensitive issues, they can be arrested, tortured, and may even disappear or be killed. As some research has shown, media professionals in Palestine are under constant psychological, physical and professional pressure, and this can influence their performance and their independence (Al-Omari, 2010).

The expansion of Jewish-only settlements is one issue Palestinian media professionals are unable to avoid, even if they would want to. For one producer, it was unfortunate that media attention for settlement expansion sometimes led to inadvertent neglect of less visible social and cultural issues within the Palestinian community itself (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). Since 2007, media crews have organised several strikes, in protest at the obstacles and restrictions imposed by Israel, and also by Hamas and Fatah, on media freedoms. Strikes started after the kidnapping of former BBC correspondent, Alan Johnston, in 2007. There were many cases of beatings and arrests of journalists around that

time and ever since (MADA, 2014). Most of the strikes were to demand greater media freedom and to ask for protection of media crews working in Palestine.

Another factor which cannot be ignored when evaluating the media is the psychological environment which interconnects with the socialisation of media professionals. As will emerge later, when interviews with media producers in Gaza are discussed in more depth, media producers confirmed that they were affected by frequent and lengthy daily power outages, which make it a priority for them to be able to cope with crises that arise at work. Shortages of equipment and inadequate equipment maintenance were also problems for producers in their daily life (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013).

Gazan producers do not only report the crises, they live the crises too. West Bank media producers face a similar situation. Producers in the West Bank are reliant on the budget margins provided by donors. This means their jobs are constantly threatened, not necessarily by the political authorities, but by the prospect of withdrawal or freezing of donor funds, often for reasons that have nothing to do with local dynamics. When the funding for the Palestinian *Sesame Street* was frozen in 2011, it affected the performance of the media crew and undermined their job security.

Israel's policy of arresting, restricting and disrupting the freedoms of Palestinian individuals, under the excuse of self-defence, is most visible when Palestinian civilians exercise their right of resistance. Such resistance is often met by counter-violence from fully armed Israeli troops, accompanied by armed, and often illegal, settlers. Arrests, including those of media professionals, are a programmed, routine policy. Arbitrary arrests are routine under each successive Israeli government, as a means to control Palestinian civilians under occupation. The number of arrests of Palestinians since 1967 has been estimated at over 800,000 (UNOCHA, 2012), including men, women, children, pregnant women and the disabled. Arrests are accompanied by intimidation, harassment and torture, also used during interrogation and detention, as evidenced by numerous independent reports (Falk, 2013; Jamal, 2001).

Such pervasive patterns of arbitrary arrest are of a wider concern to Palestinian media professionals, who are often the first victims. The

arrest practices, started by the Israeli military in the first Intifada, until now present a constant threat to media professionals who, due to the nature of their work, are forced to interact with the Israeli military at checkpoints, villages and hotspot areas. The PA and the *de facto* government in Gaza have followed the same method, of arresting media professionals who seek to report on violations by the Israeli security forces. In May 2011, Palestinian photographer Mohammed Othman was shot in the spine while covering a Nakba protest at the northern border of Gaza. Holding a camera is often seen as no better than holding a gun. Other media professionals were sentenced by Israeli authorities to years in jail, for example because they refused to disclose their sources of information and refused to share their contacts with Israeli media (Bishara, 2013).

The issue of Palestinian prisoners 'holds a prominent position in Palestinian satellite media' (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013). No day passes without media professionals being occupied with a story related to prisoners. In news and political programmes, prisoners are often discussed in the broader context of ending occupation and violent conflict. The fate of incarcerated Palestinians is considered critical to achieving an eventual, so-called solution to the Palestinian – Israeli stalemate (Al-Hassan, 2010). The case of prisoners is considered a public opinion issue, which has shaped the production of media as it currently exists. There are no exact numbers of how many media professionals were arrested, but generally speaking, in such a small society as Gaza and the West Bank, almost every journalist knows some media staff members who are in prison.

The Palestinian Centre for Development and Media Freedom (MADA, 2014) has documented several cases of arrest, torture, and banning of TV stations and newspapers. For example, Israeli troops attacked the Al Ayyam newspaper in Ramallah in 2014, in order to warn staff members to stop printing Gaza-based newspapers and distributing them in Ramallah. Similarly, journalists were interrogated by Israeli security apparatuses in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The reality of mass incarceration, administrative detention and the conditions of imprisonment are frequently discussed issues in the political environment. Therefore, they co-determine the content that Palestinian media has to address. Other issues include borders, access to water resources, Jerusalem, Israel's invasive wall, security and the

siege/blockade of Gaza. All these issues are interconnected and highly complicated matters that have a profound relationship to the way in which various Israeli governments employ religious, economic, security and legal pretexts to protect their status quo.

In any case, conditions on the ground continue to influence and shape the content of satellite media, and the daily circumstances and events for media producers are largely affected by the reality around them. One example is where media are embedded within the military, and in effect protected by them, as with the journalists who accompanied US military units invading Iraq in 2003 (Lynch, 2006). The same applies to Palestine as well, e.g., in locations where daily attacks and riots between Palestinians and Jewish settlers take place. There is no doubt that Palestinian political environments play a critically important role in shaping media production (Bishara, 2013; Bishara, 2012; Al Turk, 2008; Al-Omari, 2010). Most contemporary governments around the world rely on mass media to achieve their goals.

In the context of Palestine, in addition, the goals of Hamas and Fatah are reinforced by media professionals' motivation in using their work to further the 'noble' cause of opposing Israeli occupation, intimidation and arrests (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). This goal motivates journalists in Palestine, even when they themselves become the target of arrests. This is why one can assure that any given prevailing political philosophy is one of the most important factors determining the media system in any state. Political environments also help shape the nature of press freedom, by outlining sets of laws and legislations which determine the models of such media freedom (Matar and Harb, 2013). Israeli security forces are not the only ones to harass journalists and media professionals – Hamas and Fatah also practice arbitrary arrests, mistreatment and arbitrary detention. This was particularly marked during the years 2007-2013, when civilians paid the price for political rivalry between the two factions. Since May 2014, the harassment of media professionals by Palestinian parties has reduced somewhat.

Media producers in the West Bank face, at the same time, donor or sponsor restrictions that they are expected to abide by, whilst also dealing with the financial, logistical and political consequences of Israeli occupation and the political agendas of Palestinian factions from within. What this results in is that in these tiny pieces of land, where people live

under occupation, there are very few means to ensure the survival of media freedoms and principles.

There is a need to study methods of decision-making that are interconnected to the physiological environment. In some situations, media producers of live shows such as *Pioneers of Tomorrow* have to be ready to decide how to deal with unforeseen circumstances while airing the programme. For example, one producer (Interview: Al Amriti, producer of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, 2013) referred to a situation where a child who was a guest on the show was comfortable so long as cameras were off-air, but who started crying the moment the show went live. As well as being traumatic for the child, this is daunting for producers, since many children in Gaza and West Bank are traumatised by the war. Collective trauma makes it difficult to witness to terrible tragedies suffered by people, and adds a burden for media professionals who wish to ‘tell the truth’.

4.5 Media Producers in Palestine: Local Constraints and Opportunities

In this section we move away from constraints and pressures imposed by the overarching realities of Israeli Occupation on media producers and journalists in Palestine, towards the more ‘horizontal’ pressures and opportunities for producers that result from forces operating largely within and across Palestinian society and politics. With a view on outlining the conditions that exacerbate or reduce the grounds for ‘factionalism’ and ‘defactionalisation,’ this section considers how to move beyond polarised and militaristic agendas. The producers and senior managers of the PSC and ASC were introduced in a short ‘who’s who,’ in Chapter 1 (see section 1.7). The producers who were the most informative included Al Bardawil and Abu Jarad, both of the ASC, and Al Asfar and Al Amriti of the PSC, the latter interviewed remotely but being helpful and open. In the rest of this section, various pressures on these journalists will be explained in more depth.

4.5.1 Professional and ideological pressures

Programming production is a process which includes brainstorming ideas, locating budgets, finding actors and guests, planning logistics and following up with implementation. Each phase of production is subject

to several forms of professional and logistic pressure. In most cases, programmes have specific times for airing, either live or pre-recorded. This translates into time pressure and deadlines that have to be met. This type of pressure is part of the professional's daily routine. In Palestine, as elsewhere, event-chasing is also a part of the media's job, though perhaps less so in children's and cultural programming. Nonetheless, the PSC and ASC make sure that shows run on time – otherwise, according to Al Amriti (Interview: 2003), there is a risk that phone calls start coming in from regional observers. This occurred, for instance, when *Pioneers of Tomorrow* ran late for technical reasons.

As in the case of the PSC and ASC, there is some evidence, despite denials, that factional media places political and ideological pressure on media producers. One can observe these types of pressure in the field, for example when presenters of *Burning Brands* corrected their use of terminology during audience participation, replacing the term 'Israel' with 'Zionists' or 'usurper entity.' Political and ideological pressures are put on media producers in Palestine through requiring them to adhere to internal guidelines, or through personal influence on producers of those up the factional ladder. Generally, political systems in all countries rely on media to do the key work of communication (Al Turk, 2008).

Each organisation has rules and guidelines that regulate its satellite media. For example, the ASC's rules and regulations focus on Islamic identity, as the ASC states in its motto 'aiming towards an Islamic media.' This can imply, for example, that male staff members may be discouraged from regular, direct contacts with young women at the TV station. This does not fit in with the belief of all those who work at the ASC, as some do the precise opposite of avoiding contact when they are outside the workplace of the TV channel (Yousef, 2015). There is a distinct lack of participation of young women in ASC programmes and they are also missing from the production process. At PSC, on the contrary, internal regulations (El-Obeidi, n.d.) ensure that women are well represented among producers and presenters of most programmes on the TV station.

Political and ideological pressures influence staff recruitment processes, and in factional media this is based mainly on political affiliation, but also as the discussion suggests here, on gender and perhaps class. In the Palestinian situation in general, the high degree of

political factionalisation has a deep impact on many aspects of the media work. Even ideas concerning the decoration of studios are politicised (Abuzanouna, 2012), especially when political factors combine with ideological pressures.

One may argue that the presence of political factions with conflicting agendas and interests has made the case of Palestinian media a particularly good example of what happens when political and ideological pressures clash. This is documented in the latest Israeli wars in which ideological perspectives and political considerations were present in the performance of Palestinian media crews (MADA, 2014). In order for media producers to maintain their jobs, they have few options besides giving in to ideological pressures imposed by factional TV stations. This is why, on some occasions, political elites who own the TV channels tend to complain that some staff members are even more ideologically committed than their bosses (Interview: Al Bardawil: 2013).

4.5.2 Social-cultural and economic pressures

Programming and editorial decisions are made by media crews. In ASC, for example, most journalists are guided by social norms and regulations that define what is *haram*, or not permitted by Islamic values. Thus it is unlikely, if a Palestinian poet made explicit reference to sexuality in his poems, these would be unlikely to be broadcast, since they would be viewed as unacceptable from a conservative religious point of view. Socio-cultural pressures influence the transmission of programming content and impact the process of selection of guests. Media crews select content that meets what they view as the needs of society.

Gramsci helped in explaining how the media compromises in order to retain a certain level of dominance: 'the fact of hegemony presupposes that account be taken of the interests and the tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised, and that a certain compromise equilibrium should be formed' (Gramsci, 1971: 216). Social development is essential in any society, as it aims toward achieving rapid social change and it spreads unified culture among readership. This makes the profession of media producers most delicate, because the selection of topics, which aim at developing new ideas (Skuse et al., 2011), could pose a potential challenge to more traditional sectors of society. In terms of children's programming, the ASC has to deal with this more than the PSC, because the latter imports foreign guidelines regulating the content

of *Sesame Street*. This is not the case with *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. Therefore, embedded crews in Gaza are more likely to be exposed to this kind of pressure to comply with a form of 'political correctness'.

The factors and circumstances mentioned above all negatively affect journalistic performance and journalists' interest in their work. There are additional forms of pressure related to the political environment: media body elections and violations of press freedom. These additional factors are briefly mentioned below.

4.5.3 Other political pressures

When the Palestinian Authority was established in 1994, there was an immediate need to reorganise the Syndicate of Palestinian Journalists, a union which offers membership to professional journalists. Prior to the establishment of the PA, there was no stable presence of media. The PA brought in many media professionals, artists, writers and intellectuals who were invited to form media organisations. Some consider this a form of 4th estate (media) sovereignty for Palestinians, particularly after the establishment of the PA news agency. The syndicate was indeed reorganised, in accordance with the new situation following the Palestinian elections in 1996, which brought forward a new political entity. This political change was followed by geographical change and division in the Palestinian media sector when Hamas won legislative council elections in 2006. This resulted in special political circumstances, which negatively affected the work of Palestinian media. The body of media was divided, which made Palestinian factions start looking for media allies and search for their own journalists. This form of Israeli-imposed geographical division augmented the political division between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, separating journalists even more.

Palestinian media crews have had to cope with delays and obstacles in covering the Syndicate of Palestinian Journalists elections – including a fight over who should represent them (IFJ, 2014). The reasons were purely political. Fatah dominated the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate, and refused the elections. Hamas then created its own trade union or professional organisation, known as the Palestinian Journalists Block (Abu Dher, 2007). Independent media professionals were left in the middle, not knowing whom to turn to. Both sides pressured media professionals to deal with them by obtaining licenses and membership.

Undoubtedly, all of this has created stress on Palestinian media professionals who experience that the political division is also affecting their own affairs.

The delay in elections meant that several labour issues were kept on hold, including labour rights and rights of media professionals who are injured during military attacks and who cannot claim compensation from their employers due to the weakness of the trade union that should represent them. The delay in elections also made it difficult for media professionals to deal with other Arab and international syndicates – both Fatah's syndicate and Hamas's syndicate claim they are legal. Independent media professionals have called for elections, but these calls have never been taken seriously by any of the parties.

Most international human rights lawyers, including Palestinians, agree that Palestinians have the right to resist the Israeli occupation under international law (Burke, 2015; Bishara, 2012). The right to resist attack is largely based on legal principles of safety of the person, self-determination of nations, respect for the human rights and dignity of the person, three key principles of the international human rights law (Donnelly, 2013: 36-40). The widely shared view among Palestinian intellectuals is that multiple forms of resistance will persist until Palestine is freed from occupation, and Palestinians have their own state, in which they can enjoy meaningful, participatory forms of citizenship for their own populations (Al Turk, 2008; Khalidi, 2006).

4.5.4 Cultural influences

The significance of the cultural power of satellite media has grown markedly in recent years. This cultural power is rooted in the richness of local identities in Palestine across the centuries. The strong influence of Palestinian culture can be gauged from its intellectual contributions in art, literature, music, clothing and cooking, which are very distinct and unique and are still flourishing despite the geographical divisions that have carved up historical Palestine into different sub-national regions (Abu-Ghazaleh 2007). The artistic diversity of Palestinian culture, its long history of traditional popular arts, both in the Christian and Islamic traditions, is transmitted by the PSC and ASC, as well as by other, smaller satellite media channels. Contemporary Palestinian culture also remains closely connected to the cultures of several other countries, including Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, Egypt, and beyond.

Ever since 1948, when persecuted Palestinians fled their homes, the question of nationalism and national identity has tended to dominate the interest of Palestinians and of the media in Palestine. In satellite media this is reflected, for example, in an emphasis on the work of artists and poets who seek to rediscover and reclaim Palestinian cultural identity and connections with the past, and with Palestinians' ancestral lands and culture. Palestinian cinema is also very much present in the satellite media. Hundreds of films have been produced by Palestinians living in Palestine and in the diaspora. These films are aired on Palestinian, Arab and (in translation) international satellite TV channels. According to one estimate, some 800 films have been produced in Palestine, by Palestinian, Arabs and non-Arab filmmakers since 1948. Many of these films focus on land, identity and nationalism (Jacir, 2007; Al-Zubaidi, 2006:9).

Palestine's intellectual capacity has enriched Palestinian programming on satellite media, with a clear role for Palestinian academics and cinema critics (including Al-Zubaidi himself, who had his education in Germany.) Intellectuals who had their education in European schools have managed to bring back knowledge to local universities. Stories about traditional professions and crafts that Palestinians have been familiar with for hundreds of years, including hand-made embroidery, pottery and ceramics, give Palestinian satellite TV a special character. Palestinian cities are portrayed on satellite media through the names and poems of Palestinian poets. A new form of political activism gives voice to nostalgia for the homeland, and is dedicated to keeping the attachment to Palestine alive and present like a 'heart beat' connected to nostalgia (Ball, 2014:135). Movies broadcast include Palestine revolutionary films, some of which have also made it to international audiences. Examples are: *They Don't Exist* (1974), *Children Nonetheless* (1980), and *Born out of Death* (1981), as cited in an online article by Jacir (2007).

Another form of power embedded in satellite media resides in Palestinian folklore, which is an expression of Palestinian culture. *Hekayaat* (stories), oral history, dancing, proverbs, jokes, myths, traditions and norms are part of the content of satellite TV media. Dabka (national dancing) retains a special presence in TV media, just like traditional clothes in cultural TV programmes. For example, *Tatreez*, embroidered dresses with different shapes, colours and patterns

representing certain villages and extended families, are frequently featured in broadcasts. The Palestinian black and white *Kuffiyeh*, worn by former president Arafat as a headscarf, has become a global symbol on satellite media, and represents the Palestinian struggle for freedom from oppression.

The Palestinian culture represented in the programmes of the TV media is not only about symbolism. The social environment is of vital importance in shaping cultural sustainability and continuity, as well as innovation and creative ways of imagining realities outside the constraints of the occupation. Media producers must work in a society composed of groups interconnected through the many-layered social fabric that includes differences in political ideology, class, gender, age and social rank. This shapes media producers' intellectual and psychological choices, and these choices are noticeable in programme content. Interactions between Palestinian and Israeli culture have taken different routes. For example, Israel claims ownership of *Tatreez* and *Hummus*, among other cultural symbols and foods. Whilst this created almost no discussion in the Israeli media, it was much debated among Palestinians who commute to Israel for business or health care.

4.5.5 Background: codes of conduct for the media

Media ethics are a set of ethical values and principles which media workers commit to during their work. Media organisations should – just like their staff - be committed to a code of ethics, and share the values of honesty, integrity and balance, all essential parts of any good media organisation. Factionalism and the challenge of meeting ethical responsibilities, as a theme, is part of the essence of this study and should be connected to the International and Palestinian Codes of Conduct for the Media. Values like honesty, integrity and balance are now becoming part of written codes of conduct approved by the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate. These codes of conduct are meant to address the lack of professional values among journalists and media reporters who often either become victims of pressure by political parties or become tools used by the factions. In either case, their credibility and ethics are put at stake. At the beginning of the 20th century, legislations and codes of conduct continued to evolve and develop in step with the evolution of the profession and prevailing social changes. The codes of ethics governing the relationship between media

workers and their employers and profession were extended to accommodate growth factors (Ward, 2004).

In reviewing codes of conduct honoured in different countries, one discovers common values: respect for human life, the defence of justice and human rights, with variations resulting from different traditions, cultures and religions, such as the principle of gender equality and democracy, as stated by researcher Tiina Laitila (1995). She studied codes of ethics adopted by European media professionals to guide and regulate their own performance. Her study included 31 countries, enabling her to discern the reasons behind similarities and differences in the codes of conduct of different countries. She identified 61 principles, fitting into 13 categories, and summarised the categories under 6 headings.

Media ethics usually include three basic dimensions: law, freedoms and (media) ethics. The absence of any of these dimensions poses a threat to the integrity and content of media programming. Without freedom, the content of programmes becomes mundane propaganda or sheer commercialism, even if it is 'liberation propaganda' as described by Harb (2011:33) with regard to the historical, cultural, organisational and religious contexts in which the Hezbollah TV outlet operates.

Without media laws, the profession lacks legal protection, is vulnerable to distracting squabbles, internally and with the public and with sponsors. Media without media ethics becomes corrupt and its role as critical, candid watchdog is damaged. Central to most codes of conduct for journalists is the need to defend their right of expression as professionals. This means rejecting direct and indirect threats and bribes to media producers, journalists and media outlets, and clearly emphasising the right of criticism, open debate and the need for ethical, investigative and 'balanced' reporting.

The creation of 'principles of social responsibility' dates back to 1995, when Palestinian president Yasser Arafat declared a Press and Publications Law, aimed at regulating media work and providing clear, solid guidelines. Political and legal frameworks of neighbouring countries influenced the content of this law. The Palestinian Basic Law, amended in 2003, in principle grants freedom of expression, similar to those provided for by international laws. However, the Press and Publication Law has been deemed in violation of basic Palestinian and international laws (Mendal and Khashan, 2009). Article 4 of the Public Basic Law

guarantees freedom of media, but Article 7 of the Press and Publication Law restricts publishing that criticises the general political system. Similarly, publishers are asked to deposit copies of articles with the government before they are distributed, and this regulation contradicts Article 27 of the Palestinian Basic Law, in which media censorship is not permitted. Furthermore, Article 10 of the Press and Publication Law contradicts international standards in that it prohibits media from contacting foreign authorities, with the exception of correspondents. The Palestinian Code of Conduct for Journalists is in Appendix 5.

4.6 The Security Apparatuses: Realities of Occupation

Although the situation of military occupation is more obviously violent in Gaza, it is coercive in both Gaza and the West Bank. Palestine is divided into three distinct and separated territorial areas, with no direct physical contact to one another. The Gaza Strip, the West Bank and Jerusalem are each geographically distinct, fenced areas, each an isolated island, a miniature part of Palestine, and each surrounded by security walls, fences, and by inaccessible beaches. The Israeli army's military presence is pervasive. Each part of Palestine falls under a different set of security services, has a different judicial system, and distinct laws and regulations apply. This reflects the hold of the Israeli state over each area, an influence by design, which is geared towards enforcing segregation and separation of the three components of Palestine, and undermining their potential for reunification and collaboration (Finkelstein, 1995).

This very specific situation, different from any other, means there is a clear and apparent need to fully contextualise the impact of the security apparatuses within each of the three areas on local media production and content. This influence on media content happens locally in many ways. One set of influences is more positive and the other mainly negative. Neither the ASC nor the PSC are able to operate independently within Jerusalem or among Palestinian communities inside Israel. This makes the relationship between security apparatuses and media producers very tense, given the latter's hunger to reach wider audiences. In the West Bank, one consequence is that certain forms of media content become difficult to produce. For example, the PSC is not able to record cultural performances inside Nazareth for broadcasting. Interviews and fieldwork done in this study revealed that, on some

occasions, the PSC and ASC were forced to pay an intermediate media company, one licensed inside Israel, to record such performances elsewhere, so that they could be broadcast. Restrictions like these ultimately affect final content, since people under direct military occupation are reluctant to express their true feelings and frustrations, knowing they could risk punishment – or in the case of the ASC even military action - for doing so. Both in Gaza and the West Bank, producers have to deal, directly and indirectly, with the illegal actions of Israeli soldiers on a daily basis (Goldstone, 2011).

The ASC is unable to gain access to West Bank intellectuals and poets for *Burning Brands*. This too affects the contents of the programme, since at least half of the Palestinians in Palestine are not fully represented in the programmes. This may explain, for example, the relative absence of women's voices and minority voices in ASC's programmes. Only those in Gaza can be fully included. Should the ASC gain satellite access to West Bank stations, something that did not occur during the period of this study, the Gazan public would still feel disproportionately intimidated by both the security forces of Israel and the military forces of Hamas. The channel's main correspondent has been arrested by the PA security apparatus for reporting for a Hamas-affiliated media outlet.

Even those who support Hamas, and want to make intellectual contributions to *Burning Brands* and/or *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, still fear they might be arrested (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). The ASC producers are aware of this silencing of certain points of view, and of the problem of access. They also tend to agree that the absence of West Bank poets and intellectuals, for instance, has a negative effect on the quality of programme content. The ASC administration decided to compensate for this evident gap by involving guests and contributors from abroad.

Likewise, the PSC's *Cultural Flashes* suffered from a similar shortage of material related to the cultural life of people living in Gaza. Direct intimidation or indirect threat prevented them from obtaining such material from Gaza. According to field-producer and soundman Abu Shammalah (Interview, 2013):

‘as a result of our work for PSC Cultural Flashes, we started to get problems with the security apparatus... we were restricted and when we worked on the ground we become quickly targets for security personnel as individuals and not as Palestine Satellite TV’.

As he put it, there is some self-censorship on the side of both Fatah and Hamas, with “both sides avoiding operating in different settings [and preferring to operate]...only where their security apparatuses are in control.” This is also a way to avoid escalation of partisan rhetoric in the media. The same kind of thing can happen to the ASC when trying to produce in the West Bank, of course, but in Gaza the ASC has the ability to minimize the power of the security apparatuses. The ASC’s media producers enjoy warm relationships with local internal security officials, who almost always grant them permits for filming.

The ASC has been more at ease since it is in full control of content in Gaza, where the Hamas internal security apparatus supports the core missions of the ASC as a media provider. In the case of the PSC in the West Bank, on the contrary, as field producer and soundman Abu Shammalah (2013) acknowledged in an interview, production on the ground has been shrunk, so as not to result in any confrontation with security apparatuses, both Israeli and Palestinian. Land Day is a special event that Palestinians mark annually. When they wanted to cover the commemorations, the PSC’s media crew and the organisers of the Land Day commemorations reportedly did not get permission from Gaza’s *de facto* authorities. The PSC’s producers were then not able to get around this restriction and were obliged to present an ambiguous segment of a *Cultural Flashbes* episode (CF10) (Abu Shammalah, 2013). Both sides tend to avoid operating outside areas in which their own security apparatuses are in control.

In the West Bank, media content for the PSC’s producers is influenced by restrictions on freedom of movement and daily intimidation and arrests of Palestinian by Israeli security apparatuses. However, in the West Bank, the relative harmony between President Abbas of the Palestinian Authority and the PSC management at least produced one dominant vision of the meaning of nationalism, in the form of Palestinianism. When interviewed, the PSC’s producers denied that this situation resulted in any pressure or intimidation imposed upon them. However, PSC’s programme content is undoubtedly shaped by this situation of consent and mutual engagement (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013).

4.7 Financial Restrictions and International Agendas

Another factor is the constant financial pressure that reduces media outlets' choice of content, studio space and materials. Studios are often used for multiple purposes and thus contain a range of different background materials. Obtaining new or replacement equipment can be difficult. The producer of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, for example, had to apply to the Board of the ASC in order to purchase a new sofa for the show, which he got after lobbying the Board members (Al Amriti, 2013). Yet sometimes, when funding shrinks, media producers are forced to think of more creative ways of cutting on costs.

As is the case for any media outlet, financial resources and logistical support are key to allowing producers to amplify their messages, and reach wider audiences, using all the human skills available to them. Whilst access to capital can be a creative and positive tool, it can also prove destructive and can negatively influence the content of programmes, if wider communications policies are developed in agreement and consultation with influential and 'moderate' regional and international supporters. In the case of ASC and PSC, despite having regional and international financial support, the political 'megaphone effect' (Bloch and Lemish, 2003) of polarised messages was not that visible in children's and cultural programmes, at least not during the selected period of study in 2009-2010.

Compared with the West Bank, in Gaza, it even more difficult to obtain equipment and materials due to the blockade imposed for several years by Israel. The PSC has 1,300 staff members in total, all working for television and in various sections of the PA public relations department. The 2013 general budget for the PSC was around \$39.4 million, including operating costs and salaries (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). In comparison, the ASC has fewer staff (around 400), with operating costs and salaries at around \$5 million in 2013 (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013).

If one looks at satellite media as a commercial project, then all broadcast items should be adapted to attract viewership. When funding was frozen for the PSC's *Sesame Street* in 2011, following a vote in the UN, the show had to cease production and actors stopped receiving their wages (Interview: Sayeigh, 2013; Cheslow, 2012). In the case of *Burning Brands* of the ASC, when the presenter asked about the possibility of meeting face-to-face with poets and artists from other Arab states,

similar to what is done in Yousri Fawda's show 'Special Visit' on Al Jazeera, the proposal was rejected due to financial constraints on the ASC.

Economic pressure also results from a media crew's need to avoid specific topics, in order not to lose contracts and work opportunities. For instance, discussing children's rights and blaming international or local groups for lack of attention to this problem could result in lost contracts. One media professional experienced something similar, when he upset a UN agency by showing boxes of expired medications, dumped in Gaza's agricultural land (Al Rantisi, 2015).

Some journalists lost work after criticising local human rights groups, and civil society leaders ganged up against the journalists who dared question the role of these human rights groups or were critical about mistakes committed by medical doctors (MADA, 2014). Work opportunities can indirectly affect the selection of programme topics covered, especially when dire economic conditions are closely connected with people's social relations. In the same sense, media producers obviously cannot do their job without the financial means to maintain themselves and their families.

With 1,300 staff, the PSC has far more staff than ASC, which has around 400. Not all these 1,300 in PSC staff work for television; some work in various sections of the PA's public relations department (Forgione, 2004). As also noted earlier, however, at almost \$40 million per year, the budget of the PSC's programmes is far higher (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013) than ASC's budget for programmes, which is estimated at around \$5 million per year (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013) for a similar.

Financial restrictions may be on factor that forces media producers to look for methods to defactionalise media content, so as to appeal to a wider audience and reduce costs. During the time of this study, the ASC received its core funding from the Islamic movement of Hamas. Soon after Hamas took control of Gaza, it was forced into political isolation upon the tight shutdown of Gaza's borders in 2008. The resulting loss of revenues for Hamas forced it to review costs and budgets and to continue with only what were seen as essential themes and topics in ASC's production. One result of the budget cuts was that the cultural and children's programming was managed with very little intervention by political elites and with minimal budgetary support (Alshaer, 2012; Falk, 2013; Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013).

This was an awkward situation to handle, considering that the factional political elites are the ones that provide financial support. When political and economic embargoes are in place, banks are under pressure and budgets are cut. This brings a tightening of belts and under such conditions of scarcity those working in media may feel the need to compromise on their messages and appear more moderate. As Head of the ASC's Board, Al Bardawil (2013) saw it as of great importance to maintain a level of harmonisation in media production, a very much needed approach if tensions are to be reduced in a post-conflict context.

To save on costly programming, the political elites funding the ASC and PSC had little option but to increase the share of cheaper kinds of programming, like cultural and children's programmes. Budget restrictions led to a lack of state-of-the-art equipment, so the ASC's producers did not have access to High Definition equipment to improve image and sound quality needed, for example, for state-of-the-art news and drama. Although the ASC's staff members are willing to work, often without payment, to serve their party's interest, this cannot offset the pressures of funding shortages on defactionalising of content through the drive to economise.

Both channels have had difficulties in keeping skilled staff. At least one in four staff members working on the television programmes left for better jobs, either abroad or with other, non-factional, media outlets. Naturally, this staff turnover affected the media content. In children's programming, there is little other option to cut expenses than to rely on ready-made cartoons or pre-recorded clips, either produced abroad or imported from other channels. The ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow* used cartoons and songs that were produced abroad. Another example of this was found in episode PoT08, which taught children the morals of taking care of their parents when they get older. In this case, the video emphasised the moral message the producers wanted to share with children.

Similarly, as was confirmed in an interview with the head of the Palestine Sesame Street workshop, the PSC's *Sesame Street* borrowed materials from other Sesame Street workshops around the world. (Interview: Sayeigh, 2013). There was also borrowing of content, as in episode SS03, where characters from US *Sesame Street* were used when Tali snored and Almo wanted to sleep. All of these were economy

measures that tended to push content towards defactionalisation. Such economies were needed, even though, as Al Bardawil put it (Interview, 2013): ‘...our staff members are raised in such a way as to sacrifice their life, as well as their time’ for the media station they work for.

All this diversity requires a budget for production work outside the studio, something that was missing in most of the *Pioneers of Tomorrow*’s episodes. With a few exceptions, there was simply no budget for such filming outside of the studio. For example, sending a satellite unit (SNG) to follow a child or sending a film crew outside the studio or local area implied additional production costs that could usually not be met by the ASC. *Pioneers of Tomorrow* was also guided by the principle that Gaza must be represented as being under a blockade, and that first there was a need to raise awareness of the occupation, and to use all means, including children’s TV programmes, to break that occupation.

4.8 Beyond the Hamas-Fatah Conflict?

Palestinian journalists’ largest concern has always been the territorial fragmentation and the severe restrictions on their freedom of movement, rather than factional media content or the ‘war of words.’ However, there is an obvious form of control by Palestinian journalists in the field of cultural and children’s TV programme production (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). It might be that media professionals and journalists work so closely together that professional boundaries become opaque. This journalistic dominance leads to a less central role for media producers. Ideally, the ministries of media, civil society and media groups, as well as media professionals who studied media and learned from the experience of prominent TV personalities should become more familiar with the requirements of dialogue and how the media professionals need to produce media content in an as balanced manner as possible. When owners of a TV channel believe a journalist can do a one-man-operation, is capable of handling everything related to production, sound, lighting, and editing, then producers find themselves marginalised or pushed out. On the ground practices prove that journalists have also become hosts for TV programmes, as well as producers at times.

The lack of a Palestinian body to organise the media and press has made it more difficult for journalists to preserve professional distinctions between journalism and production. In the case of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*,

cameramen who are used to short footage for news production also film the children's programme (Interview: Abu Jarad, 2013). The same goes for *Cultural Flashes*, where someone on the team involved with SNG broadcasting for Breaking News is also the producer of a cultural show (Interview: Abu Shammalah, 2013).

In any case, there is a blurring of the lines within the staff between those with work experience in media production but lacking specialist education and training in journalism (Galtung and Fischer, 2013), and professionally trained journalists. This is especially seen on the technical side, involving lighting, camera work and video editing. 'Unfortunately, due to this confusion in job description, or in studio multi-tasking, there is constant accusation from journalists against media professionals that not everyone who sits behind a microphone is a journalist and not everyone carrying a camera is a cameraman' (Interview: Al-Shafi, 2013). In the early years of the Intifada, Palestinians regarded everyone associated with media as a journalist. The situation currently is slightly different, since the *de facto* government in Gaza has given licences to dozens of media-production companies, most of which are producing programmes and films, mainly for TV.

The question should also be asked as to whether the network of journalists is actually of help in reaching out to artists, poets, and public figures (Interview: Abu Shammalah, 2013). A journalist who may have no professional education except on-the-ground experience and being well-connected to the community, may nonetheless be more capable than a professional media producer, who might not have the same easy access to local communities (ibid). However, the term 'producer' is seen as rather problematic from the point of view of those who have that role (Al Shafi, 2013; Al Asfar, 2013; Al Amriti, 2013). In the PSC's programming, those running the production engines refuse to be called 'producers' by journalists who want to give them a more respected status in the community they deal with.

Interestingly, there seems to be a specific form of 'specialty' in the field of media – as the same producers who work on culture programming are more likely to be doing other programmes as well. Sometimes, the ASC's host of *Burning Brands*, Younies Abu Jarad, is seen giving news briefings or hosting other shows as well. Although this is not part of his job description, it has shaped his '*socialisation and attitudes*' with

the ASC (Shoemaker and Rees, 1996; Gans 1979; Gitlin, 1980) – at least in conversation. He is originally a poet and now a media producer and show host. It seems that some staff must be multi-taskers. The role he plays is mostly shaped by his interactions outside the studio, including his contacts with social groups (D’Acci, 2004). A similar thing is seen in the PSC’s production unit where *Cultural Flashes* used Palestinian producer Wael Mansra also as one of the cultural editors of the newspaper *Al Ayyam*, and as one of the administrative heads of PA’s ministry of culture. A similar thing happened with co-host Amani Abu Hantash, whose interests lie in culture, language and literature. Walid Al Sheikh is a well-known poet, and he has served as co-host as well. The three co-hosts are not journalists, but media personalities.

The fact that these three co-hosts appear on air could raise concerns among journalists, who still believe, despite the co-hosts being experts in their own specific fields, that anyone running a show must be a (specialist) journalist. Media producers see this issue as problematic, especially when they need to use equipment, such as lighting and sound apparatuses, that belongs to journalists, and given the fact that the primary focus of TV channels is still news coverage. To avoid this contentious issue, stations began using other companies with their own specialised cultural and children’s media production teams.

Government control appears weak, as there are indications of a collapse of social capital in Palestine, where trust and cooperation, considered to be indicators of social capital, have been eroded historically by internecine violence and political competition (Khalidi, 2010). Trust across the Palestinian territories has all but collapsed. The breakdown in social capital has contributed to the dismantling of Palestinian society from the Palestinian family outwards. Trust and cooperation within political factions can appear stronger than local, domestic family ties, which may be stretched by the political factionalism in which family life is unavoidably embedded (Tawil-Souri, 2007). One reason for this is the result of the behaviour of Palestinian political elites who, even after 8 years, continue to extend the conflict by postponing a reconciliation dialogue and failing to reconstitute Palestinian social capital (Bauck and Omer (eds.), 2013; Rabbani, 2008). When Israel divides factions against one another, by making dialogue difficult, this tends to boost the polarisation of Palestinian political life, thereby

reinforcing a tendency for factionalism already embedded in political structures and spatial separation.

Most nations transitioning through a period of national liberation to governance by political elites enter a stage of chaos and conflict (Bishara, 2012). However, the case of Palestinian political elitism is different because it has entered a stage of chaos and conflict before the process of liberation from Israeli occupation has ended. This added chaos and conflict has had a negative impact on the unity of Palestinian society and has eroded trust between members. This makes it very difficult for media producers to function.

Any initial positive impact of political elites has been replaced by negative trends that emerged after the establishment of new elites (the PA was formed in 1993) that differ from prior elites, which were part of the original ideological Al Aqsa Intifada. The main goal of Al Aqsa Intifada activists was to sacrifice themselves for the sake of society and the Palestinian cause. More than other social factors, the role of Palestinian political elites has negatively influenced the formation of social capital, including the roles of civil society, religion or even family (Al Barghouti, 2012; Khalidi, 2010). This negative influence has increased as a result of the fighting that erupted between Fatah and Hamas. This is further elaborated in Chapters 6 and 7.

Among researchers, there is clear recognition for the positive role civil society played during the Intifada in strengthening Palestinian social capital; its contribution was equivalent to the role played by a state (Torrse, 2013), which, in the case of Palestine, is absent due to the Israeli occupation. This role of civil society, in substituting for the state, decreased significantly after the division of Gaza and the West Bank between Hamas and Fatah respectively. This weakened the formation of Palestinian social capital needed to combat the influence and dominance of political elitism. Palestinian society is unique in many ways, as it was largely established around Palestinian factional organisations, including NGOs linked to these factions. Evidence of this can be found in the left-wing dominance of pioneering human right groups and cultural activists in Palestine.

Furthermore, the positive role that the family played in the coherence of Palestinian society due to the trust among its members has also decreased after the cold conflict between Fatah and Hamas. In Palestine

there seems to be a preference for political affiliation over family relations. Loyalty to political groups rather than family groups has impacted social issues like marital options and divorces, which are decided on the basis of factional affiliation rather than on familial ties. Employment within both the PA and the Hamas *de facto* government is strictly reserved for political affiliates. More independent thinkers and professionals are excluded or pushed out (ICHR, 2003). Over the years, especially in Palestine media, contexts have been ignored.

People working within government or civil society sectors can be fired for their more liberal political views. A culture of fear has arisen among families that prefer not to get involved in political affiliations in order to maintain their benefits and keep jobs (Yousef, 2013). Ideological diversity and pluralism does not necessarily mean that religion plays a negative role in social capital formation.

The state of the division between Fatah and Hamas is responsive to international conditions dominating the Middle East (Abu Dher, 2010). The two Israeli wars on Gaza in 2008-2009 and 2012 appeared to reduce the divisions between the two sides, because of shared Palestinian resistance, which encouraged greater cooperation - and less competition - between the two sets of political elites. During the two Israeli wars on Gaza, Fatah and Hamas fought together against Israeli tanks. However, Fatah lost control of Gaza and Hamas confiscated Fatah's armaments, just as Fatah took control of West Bank and took control of Hamas' armaments (Hroub and Quneis, 2011).

Trust between Fatah and Hamas has risen and fallen on many previous occasions. It generally increased when both sides equally committed to previous national agreements in Cairo, Doha and Mecca, and decreased rapidly when either of the parties refused to cooperate in implementing prior agreements, including, for example, the agreement around preparation for elections in 2011. Continued division between the two rival regimes is bound to change the internal dynamics of both Fatah and Hamas (Khalaf, 2008) and to affect any workable framework for ending the Israeli occupation that involves the cooperation of both Hamas and Fatah (Bauck and Omer, 2013).

The nature of the Hamas-Fatah division is echoed in the rhetoric of Fatah's and Hamas's factional satellite TV stations in the way they approach dealing with the occupation. The secular/religious tension between the parties is one of the factors that contribute to ongoing

confrontation and cold conflict. The Hamas-Fatah conflict led to squabbling between the elites when Hamas decided to take part in governance (Al Turk, 2008).

Hamas's entrance into the political arena was a good practical test of the extent to which Palestinian elites believe in or ignore principles of democracy and whether or not they are able to manage conflict over political position. The political elites of neither Fatah nor Hamas believe that the opposing side views them as worthy of political partnership. Unfortunately, this mutual lack of trust has resulted in the evolution of a culture of violence. There is a widespread belief that use of harmful force is the only option for resolving the conflict. The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that there is a constant dispute about 'the message,' and who controls the microphone, as well as who says what, where and when, and who has the final say. The 'war of brothers' leaves all aspects of Palestinian society in limbo, awaiting a solution.

Following the chaotic situation generated by the 'war of the brothers,' children's and cultural programming, produced by media professionals who tend to de-factionalise the content of programmes, could have become a departure point for reconciliation. There is evidence that this involved a deliberate attempt to defactionalise the content of media (Interview: Abu Mohsen, the ASC's head of programming, 2013). Media, however, still has to contend with the influence of political elites whose ethics are less than ideal. One option to defactionalise' media and reduce the influence of political elites is to link media protocols to some sort of regulatory structure. This could generate guidelines for media ethics and linkage to international and Palestinian codes of media conduct.

Condit suggests that the dominant forces in a society 'must articulate a worldview that accommodates a broad range of interests, not merely the leading group's interest' (Condit, 1994: 206–7). The ASC's administration came to the conclusion that such compromises are in no way meant to be spontaneous gestures of goodwill, but that, instead, production in the ASC and PSC is a 'negotiation among elite and non-elite groups and therefore always contains interests of non-elite groups, though to a lesser degree' (Condit, 1989: 119).

Unlike some producers interviewed at the ASC, PSC staff were more outspoken about the need for defactionalisation of programming and the broadcaster's vision. The head of PSC's producers, Al Shafi (Interview:

2013), made this clear, stating: 'I am convinced as a producer that I should have a contributing role in ending the political division which we are paying the price for...We must have a role.' In this context, producers are aware of their limits, but are also aware that if compromises are not made, they risk losing viability and audiences. 'We cannot be dim-witted... we have to deal with changing circumstances around us' (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013).

A statement like this suggests that those working at the ASC at the production level are fully aware that this also means change in the overall vision away from former factionalism. As Strinati noted, inspired by a Gramscian perspective, hegemony is not a fixed set of ideas. Rather, in applying this to the Palestinian media of both the PSC and ASC, it is 'shifting a set of ideas by means of which dominant groups strive to secure the consent of subordinate groups to their leadership, rather than as a consistent and functional ideology working in the interests of a ruling class by indoctrinating subordinate groups' (Strinati, 1995:170-1).

In the case of the PSC and ASC, logically, the structure and TV outlet need to be presented before a more detailed discussion of the vision of each TV channel. To link this to the theoretical framework of this study, both the PSC's and ASC's media practices have some resonance with the concept of 'bones.' This concept refers to the core structure of the ideas and beliefs of Hamas, and how these have been 'affected' in the past by factionalism, in which hegemonic power is expected to be strong. The PSC adopted a more open and even 'counter-hegemonic' approach, struggling to defactionalise the media. This posed a challenge to the dominant principles of what constitutes legitimate and normal political approach. The urge to have a role in ending the political division seems to have come with a clear intention of compromises in vision, which ultimately affect production and programming. The interviews have thus given some evidence that 'defactionalisation' is a goal. Only a more detailed analysis of content (in Chapters 6 and 7) will confirm whether this is the case.

4.9 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has offered a general understanding of the working environment of Palestinian media professionals and has identified some of the key constraints under which their media work has to be carried

out. The influence of satellite media has been explained, and the reader is now more acquainted with the ways in which media producers and professionals in Palestine have to respond or adapt to the difficult context in which they operate, under several sets of external and internal constraints. What should be clear, even from this short account, is that media producers and professionals in the Palestinian context have to deal with pressures that differ markedly from the pressures experienced by media colleagues in other locations, where the media operates more or less independently, and without excessive economic and psychological pressures and constraints, such as in Sweden, the US or the Netherlands, for example.

This chapter has presented the contextual background for a deeper understanding of how Palestinian media producers negotiate their complex working environment. It helps to understand how, as we will see in later chapters, satellite media producers and journalists still manage to make sense of working under almost impossible conditions in both Gaza and the West Bank. Satellite TV can be considered one of the most modern modes of mass communication, as well as one of the most 'risky' ones, since it attracts all age groups and all kinds of opinions. There have been growing controversies around children's TV programmes in recent years, as television – especially satellite TV – has come to be viewed as a powerful messenger and as children are viewed as vulnerable to whatever values and narratives satellite TV programmes offer them (UNICEF, 2010). In Chapter 5, the comparative context of the systematic content analysis presented in Chapters 6 and 7, is outlined. In Chapters 6 and 7, broad comparisons are drawn between the two selected children's programmes and the two selected cultural programmes, in terms of their content. The ASC and PSC are also compared, with regard to the content of their children's and cultural programmes. Some examples are given to illustrate similarities and differences. First Chapter 5 will address two research questions, building on the last point raised in this chapter about the key political and social influences on those involved in the production processes and decisions. It will also be important to consider how non-dominant groups, especially women and religious minorities, influence content and production.

5

Contextualising ASC and PSC Children's and Cultural Programming and Production

5.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the programming and production, in terms of structure and content, of the four selected media programmes, and will provide the basis for the more in-depth comparative discussion presented in Chapter 6. In this chapter, some background factors that influence the content of Palestinian satellite media are considered. The main focus is on programming and production processes that inform the specific production decisions, and on the specific content analysed in Chapter 6.

A growing interest and an increase, in terms of volume, in children's and cultural programming on Arab satellite media in general is having a significant impact on the public, which can be linked to changes in the working environment of media producers in Palestine. Although the West Bank falls under PA control, and Hamas controls Gaza, both areas are also fully under Israeli occupation. This makes for a doubly challenging environment for media producers to work in. Some of the problems arising from this complex situation were described, in general terms, in Chapter 4. Free movement of people is impossible in the areas mentioned, and this seriously affects media crews' access to newsworthy events taking place outside the confines of Gaza or the West Bank. Their ability to physically move in order to exchange knowledge and be exposed – in person - to new patterns of media production, for instance in neighboring countries in Europe or further afield, is severely restricted. However, the advent of social media, YouTube and other forms of communication, such as Skype, has opened up new opportunities for information exchange, without (much) control by

border guards. Such communication is, of course, is subject to different kinds of surveillance.

The PSC and ASC will be discussed as two different forms of Palestinian satellite channels, in relation to the 'circuits of media' theoretical framework of D'Acci (2004) and a Gramscian (1971) understanding with a special focus on both channels' visions, aims, programming, budgets and personnel. In addition, the media production and sets of procedures for broadcasting of both channels will be discussed.

After the previous chapter, which dealt with the first main research question, this chapter paves the way for addressing the second main research question: *In the local, regional and global context, how does the content and production of the four children's and cultural programmes in these two satellite TV stations communicate issues in relation to the nine selected themes?* First, the vision and programming of both TV channels is presented. Next, the themes in the content of cultural and children's programmes, that are the central focus of this study, are analysed and compared. Both TV channels are shown to be very different in terms of their key points of thematic focus, their agendas and the overall structure of the programmes. In Chapter 6, the two children's programmes are compared. Then, in Chapter 7, the two cultural programmes are compared. This is followed, in Chapter 8, by a discussion of the influence of non-dominant groups, especially women and children, on the programme content, along with a discussion of the newly emerging forms of 'Palestinianism.'

The researcher aims at highlighting both the vision and structures that drive production in each satellite TV channel. Also, in this chapter, elements of the analytical framework chosen for this study are used to interpret how the programmes of both channels – the ASC and the PSC – compare, in broad terms. The views of some interviewed producers on this matter are included, where relevant. In deciding on content of media production, sometimes producers respond to a factionalised audience by providing more factional content to gain audiences and public support. At other times the demands of audience imply that defactionalisation should take place (Hroub and Quneis, 2011). Each channel is examined in turn, and their cultural and children's programmes are then compared.

5.2 PSC: Palestinian Satellite Channel

The origins of the PSC were presented briefly in Chapter 1.3. From its start onward, the PSC had a close relationship with the PLO. In addition, the vision of PSC derived from the wider vision of the PLO and then, later on, the vision of the Palestinian Authority. Finally, the programming and the structure of employment in the PSC show a reasonable degree of professionalism.

5.2.1 The PLO and the PSC

When Hamas won a majority in the election of 2006, President Abbas ordered Gaza staff to sit at home and moved the management of the operations of the PSC and the Voice of Palestine radio from the Ministry of Information to his own Presidential Office (Daraghmeh, 2010). Furthermore, during the 2007 Fatah-Hamas clashes, the TV channel clearly adopted the opinions of Fatah, with Fatah leaders and PA spokesmen frequently appearing on air. Hamas confiscated all equipment and archives of the channel (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). Still, despite this, the PSC became popular, not only in Palestine, but also across the Middle East, through its cultural, arts and children's programmes as well as daily news feeds. This included *Shara'a Simsim* (Sesame Street) aired by the PSC and produced in cooperation with the Al Quds Institute of Modern Media in Ramallah. Eventually, however, the PSC started broadcasting from its new headquarters in Ramallah. When it went on satellite, the PSC also had to look for sponsors for some of its (satellite) TV programmes. Regardless of whether the sponsor is the local telecommunication company, 'Jawwal', the European Union or USAID (Sienkiewicz, 2012), they will usually want to exercise some control over content.

The PSC started off in a small room in the Presidential Office (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013), and has since then expanded to become an organisation with its own independent headquarters, but without independent funding. Palestine satellite TV, like several other media outlets, has been subject to hacker attacks since its first broadcasts. In 1995, the German government offered to replace all its equipment, as a gift to the studios, but Israel refused to allow the equipment in and returned it to Germany (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). In 2000, Israeli

troops targeted the buildings of the PSC and its transmitters in most Palestinian cities, causing further damage.

5.2.2 The PSC's vision

As discussed in Chapter 3, the vision of Palestine TV sprung from the need to build a viable Palestinian society following the Oslo Accords. It was hoped that by providing capacity building for both society and individuals, the aspirations for liberation, freedom and a stronger Palestinian state could be met (PBC, 2013). The PSC represents itself as a transparent form of media, committed to protecting the cultural and political diversity of Palestinians, in accordance with the Document of Independence of 1988 and the Basic Palestinian Law.

The PSC started with the vision of committing itself to promoting Palestinian interests inside Palestine and abroad – in the words of the PBC (2013), the need for change and transformation was ‘crystal clear,’ as was the need to respect the rule of law. The PSC aims at gaining public credibility by offering information about and questioning people in decision-making positions, whatever their allegiance or loyalties may be. One of the proudly stated visions of the PSC is to strengthen the visibility of Palestinian cultural production, with particular attention to poets, artists and intellectuals from across the political spectrum of Palestine. As stated by the PBC, its compass is directed towards Palestinian unity and it opposes the use of the media for ideological or factional agendas (PBC, 2013). In other words, the PSC does not want to portray itself as being swayed by factional influences, but as a relatively independent media institution, with a vision that transcends factional divisions among Palestinians and their leaders.

The PSC's focus is on a unified Palestinian identity through the implementation of democratic principles, representing itself as open-minded about diversity and interested in enriching Palestinian culture and traditions through cultural programmes. In the official media discourse of the PBC, the aim of the PSC is to achieve the following 9 goals (PBC, 2013):

1. Show how cultural monuments and civilisation of the Palestinian people contribute to Palestinian development, and spread this knowledge more widely among the cultures of the world.

2. Unite all inherited creative and cultural Palestinian experiences to be used in accordance with national principles.
3. Strengthen the relationships at all levels of the Palestinian people on the one hand, and of the rest of the Arab world on the other.
4. Keep pace with the evolution of Palestine and Palestinian nationals in all aspects of their lives, including the economic, social and cultural dimensions. Ensure that the Palestinian culture is connected with all other nations' cultural expression.
5. Address Palestinian public opinion in Palestine and the diaspora.
6. Inform people of the positions and decisions of the Palestinian National Authority, Palestinian legislation and politics, so that people can contribute to processes of state building and to civil society on the basis of democracy and diversity.
7. Adhere to the traditions of the Palestinian people by giving the chance for freedom of expression and for publications. In addition, guarantee all rights according to Arab and international conventions, as approved by the PLO.
8. Focus on humanitarian interests, as principles for religious belief, democracy, human rights and protection of citizens' rights.
9. Maintain a distinguished national Palestinian character through social and cultural TV programming, and do not allow damage to affect any specific category of the Palestinian society.

What is obvious in these goals is that they have been formulated by officials of Palestine TV and managers, directly involved in production, who are appointed by the PA. There is very little reference to these kinds of (mainly cultural) aims in any laws or presidential decrees. Interviews suggest that the Ministry of Information did not play a part in putting these aims together. And, in most cases, the PSC did not coordinate with other ministries of the Palestinian Authority in formulating these goals (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). As is clear from the wording, the emphasis is on depoliticising the PSC's agenda, and on focusing on cultural expression, cultural resources and making inter-cultural connections.

5.2.3 Programming at the PSC

The programming policy of the PSC is designed by the heads of the programme departments, along with the programme producers, who

decide every quarter what they want to broadcast. However, the process of media production goes through a set of steps and procedures (see Figure 2 in Chapter 7). According to the head of TV programming at Gaza's PSC, Al Shafi (Interview: 2013):

- Each producer presents a proposal with an outline of ideas, objectives, costs and target.
- After proposals have been presented, the general coordinator of the PSC passes them on to the head of the channel that has the authority to approve or decline them.
- Selection of programmes is highly dependent on the taste and priorities of the heads of programme – and in most cases the TV invites experts, but their views are not always taken into consideration.
- The final go/no-go decision is made by the general chairman.

Due to the geographical separation, staff from Gaza cannot meet with staff from the West Bank. Proposals by Gaza staff are apparently different from those of West Bank staff, especially because of the military confrontation between the two competing political parties. For example, during my field research, I found some evidence of forms of self-censorship by PSC staff members who felt intimidated by Hamas security in Gaza, and therefore refused to broadcast any 'negative' or overly critical material on Hamas. The PSC's programmes were mostly produced in Gaza where the headquarters were located, but in 2007, production and the headquarters both moved to the West Bank.

The PSC still struggles, financially, in both places. As Al Shafi (2013) states, in most cases his staff members start long arguments with heads of financial departments who do not understand the need for hiring taxis that are ready at all times for crew working on cultural programmes, and when cameras are needed for covering breaking news. The PSC began to merge with Palestine TV for its on-the-ground reporting, in order to save on budget and expenses. In any case, on-the-ground crews address local issues while the satellite channel addresses both local and global audiences.

In interviews, heads of staff emphasised that the relationship between TV management, Fatah leaders and PA officials does not compel them

to take orders (Al Shafi, 2013; Al Asfar, 2013), and that the crew works freely, expressing the views of the general Palestinian society. However, some of the facts on the ground contradict such accounts and prove there is a link. Al Shafi (2013) stated that he is a PA employee and is paid from Palestinian tax money. When asked whether the PSC can take orders from above, he admitted that, occasionally, the President's Office takes objection to content of programmes, which then has to be adjusted, or modified, immediately. He also acknowledged, however, that the PSC has facilitated more moderate leaders from the opposition to appear on programmes. This may suggest a process of making 'compromises' and reformulating depictions of different political opinions. This would help to maintain hegemony 'where certain compromise equilibrium should be formed – in other words, that the leading group should make sacrifices' of a media-content kind (Gramsci, 1971: 373), so that both the PSC and the ASC do not lose their audiences.

There is a hierarchical structure which regulates the work within the PSC. The organisation is divided into several departments. The department of news and political programming is in charge of the news (in Arabic, English, Hebrew and French,) and deals with political programmes. The department of programmes is in charge of co-ordination, décor, and production units. The department of engineering is in charge of montage, filming, graphics, SNG and lighting equipment. Financial and administrative departments handle personnel and financial affairs. There is also a department of public relations and a similar department for marketing.

Recruitment at PSC is usually done in one of two ways. One way is direct employment by the PA chairman. This is commonly used for hiring senior staff, who are often recruited not on the basis of their media experience and skill, but rather because of their 'history of struggle,' contribution and loyalty to Fatah and the PLO. A second way to recruit staff members is through the chairman of the PSC, depending on the needs of the heads of departments. The decision to hire is then taken by the PA chairman. In most cases, jobs are not announced and recruitment is not based on equal opportunities (ICHR, 2003). In some cases, staff members are not qualified for the job, but happen to show loyalty to political factions and start to learn the required skills on-the-job (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013).

One way to minimize a possible negative impact of staff who are not sufficiently qualified when hired is to provide in-service training sessions and workshops. These can be organised both locally and abroad, and media producers can benefit from them. Criteria for selection should be based on merit and on qualifications, however, and not on personal relationships and favoritism (ICHR, 2003). In recruitment talks, local producers felt they did not get as fair a chance as others and had to take jobs with international production units or news wires. There are two main reasons for this: a) the freezing of aid to the PA and b) low and unreliable wages.

As for human and logistical resources within PSC, in the past few years, hundreds of staff members in Gaza were laid off and lost work. Yet they still receive regular wages, paid by the international community in an attempt to demoralise and delegitimise the *de facto* administration inside Gaza, namely Hamas. In general, PSC has buildings and offices for TV in the West Bank – though most of these buildings were not specifically designed for media production. One of the strengths of PSC is the large number of media producers and experts working in different fields (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013).

Funding for PSC largely comes from two sources: the office of President Abbas, and the PA's general budget. The first source shrank during the period of study, after Israel refused to deliver taxes collected on behalf of the PA (Daraghmeh, 2010). To support PSC, the Ministry of Finance then assigned funding from the general budget instead of that of the president's office. In addition to these two basic sources of income there is financial support from European and Arab states (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). In some cases, contributions have come in the form of permissions to, free-of-charge, use materials, plays, songs and media contents produced abroad. The general budget of the PSC is estimated to be around 155 million NIS [\$39.8 million] (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). Two thirds of the budget is spent on staff salaries (ICHR, 2003). Salaries of staff members vary between 1000 NIS and 7000 NIS per month. This is paid in addition to privileges to senior staff members. Professional production crew with low income tends to switch jobs by heading to international media groups, which offer better wages and more security – this has become a bone of contention within the administration of the PSC (Interview: Al Asfar, 2013).

5.3 ASC: Al Aqsa Satellite Channel

Al Aqsa's origins were briefly introduced in Chapter 1.3, where its close connection with Hamas was first outlined. In this section, the origins of the ASC, its core purpose and overall vision, are revisited. In addition, attention is paid to how its producers negotiate their role within the close relationship between the ASC and Hamas.

5.3.1 Origins and creation of the ASC

At its start-up, the ASC went through a pilot phase of eight-hour daily broadcasts for about two months. After that, it began broadcasting 24/7, addressing the Arab world through NileSat moon. It started as an Islamic channel with a Palestinian identity and a focus on local, regional Palestinians and those in the diaspora. At first, the focus was mostly on issues related to the Palestinian cause, Jerusalem, prisoners and the rights of Palestinian people. The channel aims at fostering the Islamic Ummah (collective community of Islamic peoples).

The ASC represents a new release for Islamic TV production in the world, by addressing first the child, then the older youth and, last, the rest of the community. It has relied for 100% on Palestinian production crew (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). Crew members take their education and training in Palestinian institutions. The bulk of Al Aqsa programming is concerned mostly with defending the land, the nation, and retelling the plight of prisoners, martyrs and their families, caused by Israeli occupation and siege. Its broadcasts focus largely on Israel's plans to Judaize Jerusalem, and the theme of the Palestinians' right to return is a daily part of its broadcast and message to the world.

The ASC has faced several attempts at having it shut down, by Palestinians, Israel, regional and international bodies. The attempts included the arrest of their crew members, banning them from travelling, and targeting journalists who worked for the ASC during the last war (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). Also, in 2010, the ASC frequency was taken off air by French official broadcasting regulator Eutelsat, choking the ASC's broadcasts in France. In the same year, the United States Treasury imposed sanctions on a Hamas-affiliated bank and on the ASC (Barker, 2010; Zanotti, 2010). Despite the ban, the ASC continued to broadcast using alternate airwaves.

Shortly after, the US Congress blacklisted the ASC as a terrorist organisation. The ASC has become known internationally for producing a popular but controversial children's programme, *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, with ideological values that sparked international scrutiny and accusations (Jüntzel, 2008). International bodies, including Human Rights Watch, continue to criticise the programme, in which Farfur, a Mickey Mouse-like character, appears to be a combination of a political, a cultural and a religious figure (Alshaer, 2012). The accusers keep blaming the ASC for broadcasting Jew-hating material and for anti-Semitism.

However, Israel's 2009 attack on Gaza, during which the ASC's headquarters were bombed by Israeli aircraft, brought it some sympathy from wider (i.e., not just Palestinian) audiences. Despite all harassments suffered, the channel continues broadcasting, from unknown locations, as a sign of the steadfastness of the Islamic movement of Hamas (Alshaer, 2012). Al Aqsa TV is officially competing with the PSC, which represents the views of Fatah and the PLO (Alshaer, 2012). Several vilification campaigns were carried out by Hamas against Fatah leaders and the PA's security apparatuses, especially prior and during the 2007 military clashes. The ASC's involvement in the justification of the internal military confrontation between Fatah and Hamas was the reason for it being called the 'mouthpiece of Hamas black militia,' as put forward in several of the PSC's shows (El-Obeidi, n.d.).

According to Fathi Hammad, former minister of the Interior and head of the Board of the ASC Network, the Al Aqsa channel has worked hard to maintain a free media, away from pressures and external influences. The ASC is actively producing films and documentaries made in Asda City for Media Production in Gaza.

5.3.2 The ASC's vision

The ASC aspires to be the first satellite channel in the Arab and Islamic world of its kind, combining all aspects of life, including intellectual issues, themes of Islam, culture and religion within the Islamic Ummah, and defending the Palestinian cause in the memory of all Arabs and Muslims (Aqsa, 2013). The dominant logo of the channel is the golden dome of the Al Aqsa mosque. As described in the channel's mission statement, this is an attempt by the station to try and cover Palestine in

general and look at the Al Aqsa mosque as an important, essential direction for Muslims as the place of the ascent of prophet Mohammed, in recognition of the belief in the holiness of the land and the right of Palestinians and Islamic Ummah/Nation, within it. The station's image of the dome is surrounded by a circle, referring to the Arab and Islamic outreach of Al Aqsa mosque – representing a form of protection against all attempts to Judaize Jerusalem (Aqsa, 2013).

Al Aqsa's curriculum is based on Islamic thinking, which is meant to be broadcast to the Arab Islamic states and Muslim communities around the world. The ASC focuses on Islamic values and principles guided by Islamic faith and worship as a lifestyle. The use of classical Arabic in stating the case of Palestine has priority, as the ASC attempts to respond to accusations by Fatah supporters (in conversation) that it is breaking its mission and giving way on national principles.

The Board of the ASC comprises 7 selected experts on media and culture. Apart from an office in the West Bank, closed down by PA security in 2007 amidst the factional, internal fighting, the ASC has 5 offices across the Arab world, in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Yemen and Jordan. The media discourse of the ASC, as outlined by Al Aqsa (2013), includes several points that appear ambiguous in relation to factionalism and defactionalisation:

1. Put an emphasis on national, Arabic and Islamic constants, and on Palestinian suffering.
2. Avoid phrases and expressions of challenge, for example suggesting Palestine as a power equivalent to Israel.
3. Establish a dialogue between mind and emotions by transferring the ball into the Israeli court, and frankly considering Israel as the occupying power.
4. Avoid turning the international community into an enemy, and discriminate between the positions of different (e.g., Western) states.
5. Constantly speak of the need for security and peace for both states.
7. Do not reject UN resolutions, but, instead, focus on demanding that Israel implements such resolutions.

8. Put emphasis on the Palestinian cause as a basic human cause, which the international community should be held responsible for.
9. Increase discussion about the right to establish a Palestinian State, among all countries of the world, with emphasis on accepting the 1967 [contiguous] borders, and considering it a point of consent between all Palestinians.
10. Focus on phrases and idioms which still have great significance in Western thought, such as 'the right to defend Jerusalem,' 'ethnic cleansing,' expressions that are related to wars that happened in Europe, including the First and Second World War and the Bosnian war.
11. Compare Israel's crimes with global war crimes and repeatedly mention the names of war criminals and the countries in which they have been convicted.

There are a total of 400 staff members at the ASC, the majority of who are young men. At the time of this study, only 7 women were working in the organisation. These women were working mostly in production, and one TV host was a young woman. The ASC is divided in 6 main departments: engineering, general programmes, political programmes and news, production, administrative affairs, and financial affairs. The engineering unit is responsible for all decisions related to equipment, network, lighting and filming, SNG and computer networks. The general programming department is the main body. It generates ideas for programmes, studies them and figures out if they are relevant for implementation. The department is in charge of preparation, coordination, production, producers, hosts and documentary films (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). The department of political programmes and news is responsible for decisions related to the content of news programmes, politics, and reporting on negotiations between Israel, Fatah and Hamas. It has several sub-units, including for editing, the website, a unit for West Bank reporters, for news production and for monitoring (Interview, Abu Mohsen, 2013).

The production unit is divided in two parts: production and graphics, the latter being responsible for the use of sound and colour in programming. The administrative department is in charge of personnel, job descriptions and recruitment, review of work and contracts

(Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). The administrative department also handles public relations and services, including transport and drivers. Not surprisingly, the financial department deals with tenders and bids, stores, auditing and cashiers, as well as with managing the ASC's relationship with clients, donors and banks (Aqsa Annual Report, 2013).

During the 2008-2009 and 2012 Israeli wars on Gaza, the ASC performed at full capacity from five different, unknown locations. The station tried to make sure there were always 4 staff members – a host, an engineer, an editor and a producer – in each of these locations (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). Staff members can be on duty for 24 continuous hours. When working overnight, staff members stay in the same building within each location, for safety reasons. The public was puzzled when, after Israeli missiles hit the headquarters of the ASC, and other TV channels showed photos of the equipment of the TV station burning, the ASC still continued to broadcast. The secret to this was their strategy of placing 3 or more broadcasting facilities outside headquarters, for use as back-ups during any attack by Israel (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). Editors stayed for up to 22 days in one location, living there and continuing to broadcast news to the outside world.

5.3.3 Programming on the ASC

TV programming comes from an idea or set of ideas combined into one format in order to achieve a specific goal – which may be comprised of words, sound effects and music, as well as live imagery. The creation of a programme begins ideally with the producer hosting a brainstorming meeting in which he outlines his thoughts and presents them to the head of his unit. Each programme has aims and objectives focused on education, politics, culture, entertainment and religion. However, in the case of the ASC, whatever meets the objectives and vision of the channel is likely to get approval from the management. There are different patterns in the ASC's media production, depending on the nature of the programme (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013), as live shows are always different from pre-recorded ones and political news productions are very different from cultural news productions – each programme has a different format, style and structure.

For the ASC, TV programme planning is essential. The planning is a hierarchical process (will be discussed later in this chapter) involving leadership at different levels and a certain flow of information. The

goals of each TV show are gradually met by using all available resources and possibilities in the field of logistics, engineering, financial and human resources. ASC uses programming cycles (or 'circles') by dividing up the annual work schedule and spreading it out over circles, each lasting for several months – ranging from 3, 4 to even 6 months. The structure of these circles is decided upon by regular staff members, who pass on the programming plan, or circle, to a higher administrative level. This process is lengthier than what we showed earlier for PSC, and according to Abu Mohsen (Interview: 2013), involves several more steps:

- Each head of programme presents his proposals to the overall unit chief of programming – as a set of episodes for each intended programme planned for production.
- This unit chief has the responsibility to study such proposals and present them to the higher committee of programmes.
- The committee reviews and discusses the proposals with regard to compatibility with channel policy and then either approves them (if deemed necessary with suggestions for modifications) or rejects them.
- Each department's administration then makes decisions with regard to the programme's production, prepares the week's detailed schedule and allocates staff to the various production tasks.
- The coordination unit of ASC is responsible for issuing the programme schedule, which is then distributed to all departments.

The management of programming is considered the heartbeat and brain of the organisation planning for most of ASC's productions. The station relies largely on man-in-the-street reactions for the evaluation of its programmes. Its research department attempts to measure how much impact the programme has had in terms of public rating and discourse.

Funding for the ASC still lacks official record and no specific numbers regarding the general budget are available. However, one fact was established through an interview with the head of the Board of the ASC (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013). He stated that funding came directly from the budget of the Islamic Movement of Hamas, and that there was no other (external) funding. The funds available to Hamas go first to its

military and then to its media. Al Bardawil (Interview: 2013), head of the Board of the ASC, denies any claims that there is funding coming from the *de facto* ministry of information in Gaza or any other external bodies. Since the ASC is a medium that carries a public message, private sponsorship is unlikely to happen, as is the case for PSC programmes, several of which are funded by countries, commercial firms and NGOs, as discussed earlier on.

The ASC's annual budget, estimated at around \$6 million (Abu Mohsen, 2013) is largely spent on operational expenses and staff-members' salaries – ranging from \$350 - \$1100 per month for production crew (Al Bardawil, 2013). Professional staff is unlikely to opt for other jobs, as the work with Hamas requires their exclusive commitment. This is seen as a form of loyalty to the Islamic movement – viewed by Al Bardawil himself as an added value to the ASC, where crew members still loyally work even if they don't get paid on a regular basis. 'If we want to work in accordance with working criteria, when it comes to payment, the ASC will be out of business' (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013). The ASC's budget cannot be compared with that of much larger media outlets like Al Jazeera, MBC or Al Arabiya, and not even with that of most other local, non-factional media outlets.

When the ASC started, the selection criteria for media crew were based on factional affiliation and on media workers' socialisation and attitudes (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996; Gans 1979; Girlin 1980). Hamas membership or supporter status would be expected from staff. However, it seems that when the ASC expanded to address global audiences, the Board began looking for professional staff from other factions too. Such staff is, nevertheless, still controlled by programme heads who remain Hamas loyalists. As for the selection of producers, the ASC's recruitment committee hires on the basis of education, personal knowledge of staff members, 'and an ability to pin down the issues of pain' (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013), and also an ability to structure all aspects of programming. After all, the producer, planning producer, and presenter work closely together.

5.4 An Overview of Children's Programmes

This section first introduces the structure of the two selected children's programmes, with examples illustrating practice. The main difference

between the two children's programmes is the degree to which they entertain. *Sesame Street* is more entertaining than *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, which tends to adopt a more 'serious' approach to education. The noticeable gender difference between *Burning Brands* and *Cultural Flashes* is not evident for the children's programmes, at least not in the same way.

5.4.1 Structure of the two programmes

For the media, Palestinian cultural identity has 'countless ramifications at the level of production, first for workers in all aspects of the industry' (D'Acci, 2004:345). For producers, like Abu Shammalah, who found themselves living in a political divide, between constant calls for Palestinian reunification and fear of the Gaza security apparatus, 'Palestinianism' is the cultural-historical basis for the ASC's programming. From a more materialistic point of view, it is evident that *Sesame Street* had access to much larger budgets for overall production than *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. Hence, a much greater variety of audio-visual technologies could be used in *Sesame Street*, to make the imagery appealing to children of all backgrounds. Thus, *Sesame Street* is relatively sophisticated, in terms of puppetry equipment, stage props and possibilities of filming outside the studio, when compared to the fixed set and limited props of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. The following observations show this contrast in more detail:

Budgetary restrictions and religious values combine to influence the way the programmes look. The set of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* does not change from episode to episode; it always remains the same. This reflects not only the much lower budget available, but probably also the 'seriousness' of the producer's intentions. Only on one rare occasion did Nassur make an outside appearance in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, to meet hundreds of children at Asda Media Production City, at a site where Jewish settlements once stood. Children were celebrating *Eid al Fitr*, following celebrations at the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan. Perhaps this explains how and why this rare departure from the fixed setting of the studio was authorised and funded.

Each episode of *Sesame Street* has a different variety of ingredients (with different games, crosswords, short stories, children playing musical instruments,) and uses props like seesaws, cameras, soft-toys and live

pets or animals. All this, and more, is present in almost every episode of this PSC programme. None of this is considered inappropriate for children from PSC's perspective, but some of these forms of educational entertainment are viewed as un-Islamic from an ASC point of view. However, as content analysis will show, the specific problems of children living under occupation are not as fully acknowledged by *Sesame Street* producers.

This may be because in 2009-10, the programme had to more or less reflect, or could not stray too far away from, the priorities of the international donors supporting it. The risk of losing support was always present, and soon materialised, when funding was cut for *Sesame Street* in 2012. Funding was still frozen at the end of 2015, because of the resumption of discussions between the Palestinian Authority, Fatah and Hamas. Such constraints on format also influenced the content, production themes and values of ASC cultural programmes, compared with PSC cultural programmes in Chapter 7. In terms of both content and format, even the BBC noticed that when children went for outings in PSC's *Sesame Street*, they never seemed to come across any checkpoints or any signs of the occupation at all (Diab, 2012; Warshel, 2012). In the ASC studio, on the other hand, they seem to be constantly confronted with the harsh realities outside the studio.

5.4.2 Comparing context: gender, culture and religion

In *Sesame Street*, as Chapter 6 will discuss in more detail, the focus tends to be more on children's entertainment, fun, education and health, as the action moves from one scene to another, rapidly moving through the dialogue within the studio, for example, to an educational section where guest children are suddenly introduced. This also happens in between sections of 'Breaking News,' introduced by Puppet Haneen, jumping from a reminder to children about Tree Day to 'who is going to win the Bon Bon' (SS11 and SS05).



Image 5.1: *Sesame Street (SS07) Seesaws of Kareem*



Image 5.2: *Pioneers of Tomorrow (PoT16) discussing friendship*

Sesame Street tends to get into several topics directly, without much, if any, introduction from the host. It usually starts with Puppet Haneen,

who expresses curiosity or wonders about something happening around her that she does not understand.

In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, each episode actually has a different focus, though the general tools used are all similar. Sara Barhoum, the young TV presenter of *Pioneers*, opens phone lines for live viewer-participation. This often happens at a point in the sketch where Nassour (one of the Puppets) makes a mistake, which everyone witnesses on TV. Presenter Sara then asks the children a question as to whether what Nassour did was right or wrong. For example, on one occasion, he lied to his father, saying he did not attend school. Then he faced a problem when his parents discovered he slipped and broke his arm near the school (PoT13). During the study period, the show triggered phone calls from children within Palestine, as well as from people in Algeria, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and sometimes even from people in the UK. The show focuses mostly on themes of resistance, nationalism and religious discourse.

Unlike in *Sesame Street*, where children were introduced to other cultures and languages like Chinese (SS06) or the use of scientific equipment like microscopes to examine insects (SS21), this kind of scientific educational theme was not found in any episode of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* during the period of study. *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, in contrast, tended to use classical Arabic themes throughout.

Introductions to books were also used to help viewers extend their knowledge of a topic with further reading and learning. For example, in one episode (SS06), lessons on planting seeds and beans were offered, including plant nutrition (air, water, sun, soil.) The presenters talk with a marked local accent when discussing educational issues. *Sesame Street* offers extra ideas and alternatives, like the growth-enhancing effect music can have on young plants. Just as in any other country, a central element in *Sesame Street* is learning the basic (Arabic) alphabet, associating each letter with common everyday images and phonemic sounds, i.e., ‘S’ stands for ‘Sahifa’ Newspaper, or ‘M’ for Saroukh ‘Missile’ (SS17). The programme offers viewers lessons on water and energy conservation (SS06). However, changes in focus could be seen as a problem when values are not connected to, or move away from, the original values, for example when advertising education on growing ‘green beans.’

Where *Sesame Street* uses images and experiences from other nations, like a Chinese child writing the alphabet (SS06), *Pioneers of Tomorrow* has,

through its production process, also tried to connect with the outside world, in different ways. *Pioneers* presenter Sara Barhoum, along with other children (male and female,) wearing head coverings in the studio, started a show by stating 'how beautiful for a Muslim to meet all those he loves, but more beautiful to meet with you my beloved children – greetings to Algeria, Morocco, Iraq, Jordan, Gulf States, Egypt, Libya and Sudan' (PoT03). Then she reminded the children of their relationship with Allah through the daily five prayers, memorising the Holy Quran, and attending Faith and Quran seminars.

The puppet Nassur started by welcoming, and reminding children in the studio not to forget their prayers/Fajr in the mosque (PoT03). Sara followed up by reminding children who watch *Pioneers of Tomorrow* of the need for dignity and hard work in achieving what others may consider 'impossible.' Also, following the steps of Islamic scholars like Al Razi, Khowrzmi, Ib Sina (Avicenna) and Al Hassan Al Basri, Nassur moved on to say that deep-rooted Islamic civilisation will return and that 'we are going to repeat the meanings of dignity and pride followed by victory.' Puppet Nassour continued with the remark that 'we will return to Jaffo, Akko, Led, Tal el Rabi (Tel Aviv), Al Ramleh and Jerusalem' (PoT08).

Both TV programmes insist on using Palestinian names of cities and the language of Arab nationalism, although in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* this is more apparent, and fed by the spirit of religion. Sara continued and Puppet Nassour assured the viewers that all Palestinian prisoners will be freed from Israeli jails. The discussion included martyrs, who were referred to as being 'more generous than us by sacrificing themselves,' and outlining three options: 'either you will be the victor, or the injured or the martyr – choose which one,' going on to say that 'if you don't wish to be any of these three, then jump out of the *Pioneers of Tomorrow* ship... and go to the ship of frustration and defeat' (PoT07).

The wording of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* emphasised national values, with Sara telling the Aqsa mosque: 'don't be sad, one day we will liberate you .' Puppet Nassour then assured that 'one day all the children will pray in Al Aqsa mosque' (PoT15). In this same episode, programme host Sara took a pause before she offered condolences to the public for one of the children - Sheren Al Serhi - a friend of the show who recently deceased due to Israel's 'banning her from traveling for health care.' Then

gratitude was extended to a female donor in Qatar for offering support to the *Pioneers of Tomorrow* programme.

With regard to inserting intervals or breaks, *Sesame Street* does not seem to have a policy. Instead, it makes a fairly disorganised transition between different sections of the show. *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, on the other hand, for example has short video clip breaks showing a frightened child running away from Israeli bombings, among rushing ambulances, casualties and people running in panic, and the sound of a child holding a small toy singing ‘leave my land, and let me alone with my toy’ (PoT19). The same video clip shows houses, mattresses, pillows, rooms and furniture that are typical of the ones used by average Palestinians. *Sesame Street* is a bit different here, by showing a lifestyle that is slightly westernised (in clothes, living and even having a dog living inside the house with a family) (SS05). This kind of thing would never be seen in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*.

As far as programme discourse is concerned, *Sesame Street* steers away from religion-based content and has very few references to national symbols. The programme structure is presented in a way that leaves little time for breaks or messages, except for cartoons that pop up in between its main section and the section of ‘breaking news’ in which Haneen, for example, announces that one of her friends, Majd, who needs dental treatment, should not be afraid to face the dental procedure or not to fear waking up in darkness (SS15). In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the topic of happiness has been associated with doing good work, preparing well for exams (Pot05) and having faith in Allah. In contrast, *Sesame Street* portrayed the theme of happiness differently, as shown in one video with songs and images of western-looking children playing on the beach with mothers wearing bikinis, something which looks pretty foreign even to children (SS07). *Pioneers of Tomorrow* used similar images, but of Palestinian children playing on the beach of Gaza (PoT08), and avoids the use of western imagery, fashion, or concepts that contradict the traditions and religious values of the Palestinian people.

Pioneers of Tomorrow focuses on talented individuals with ‘creativity,’ and brings children into the studio who have something to share. In one case, 8-year old Hind shared a powerful song about daily life under the occupation. Six-year old Lamees recited by heart the poem ‘Identity Card’ by Mahmoud Darwish. She would not have been able to use a tele-

prompter, the use of which is limited to the presenters of the daily news (PoT20).

5.5 Comparing Cultural Flashes and Burning Brands

This section will first introduce the structure of each programme, and then give some examples of how this works in practice. To sum up on cultural programming, both programmes ended up with having poets, artists and authors sharing their experiences and works. The main difference between them was in terms of the gender participating in them, which is discussed in more detail later. There was a noticeable gender participation difference between *Burning Brands*, which relies mostly on male experiences, and *Cultural Flashes*, which engages both men and women in a more or less equal fashion. This reflects the different internal policies of both TV channels. Both see women as an important component of Palestinian society, but whereas in *Cultural Flashes* the decision is made to actively include women in the programme, in *Burning Brands* their role is less direct, and less visible, suggesting that, in the latter programme, inclusion of women may be deliberately avoided.

5.5.1 Structure of the two cultural programmes

The question of national and cultural Palestinian identity has implications for producers across the media industry, and cultural programmes are no exception to this (D'Acci, 2004:345). The presenters of *Cultural Flashes* operate as a team, together and individually, providing possibilities for different sub-components in the programme. Image 3 shows the woman presenter of *Cultural Flashes* with one of her co-hosts. Amani Abu Hantash is the permanent face of the programme, a woman presenter who appears on her own at times, and, some other times, in companionship of a co-host or guest. Budgets do influence production styles and – indirectly - the themes addressed, and in the case of cultural programming, the difference between the PSC's programme *Cultural Flashes* and the ASC's *Burning Brands* is almost as big as in the case of children's television. The static quality of the ASC's children's programmes can also be seen in their cultural programme, *Burning Brands*, whose host and presenter, and also producer of the programme, Younies Abu Jarad, appears at the centre of the screen. Image 4 shows him

appearing in formal dress, in a tranquil setting that looks like a modest and serious library, or in a purpose-built studio set. The overall impression is that of a scholarly, serious programme, sober and reflective, and, indeed, much of the show is taken up by the presenter talking directly to the audience. Thus, budgetary restrictions and religious values combine to determine what the programmes look like.



Image 5.3:
Amani Abu Hantash (right) and co-host Walid Al Sheikh, Cultural Flashes



Image 5.4: *The Presenter of Burning Brands, Younies Abu Jarad*

As far as the cultural programmes are concerned, it is noticeable that many themes are either present in every episode or not present at all. In

Cultural Flashes, for example, all episodes feature both cultural and political values as a theme. In *Burning Brands*, cultural and political values were also the two most frequently occurring themes, in 62 percent and 38 percent of the episodes, respectively. This suggests some overlap in themes between the PSC and the ASC. Zero content was registered for four themes in the ASC's programme *Burning Brands*, whereas three themes did not appear in the episodes of the PSC's programme *Cultural Flashes*. For the ASC's programme, these 'blind spots' were religious values, citizens' rights and obligations, educational values and entertainment. For the PSC's programme, the missing themes were religious values, citizens' rights and resistance literature.

In *Cultural Flashes*, unlike in *Burning Brands*, the themes of educational and entertainment values did feature, appearing in 38 and 33 percent of the episodes, respectively. The main surprises, which require further discussion and some explanation, are probably (i) the non-appearance of religious values in ASC's *Burning Brands* episodes analysed for content values, and (ii) the absence of resistance literature in PSC's *Cultural Flashes*, contrasting with its appearance in just under one quarter (24 percent) of the episodes of ASC's cultural programme *Burning Brands*. Each of these findings is revisited later on in this chapter, which considers children's and cultural programmes from a broader, comparative perspective and seeks to explain presence and absence of values as identified in the tables presented so far. Each theme is dealt with separately, as shown in Table 6.1 in Chapter 6.

One of the top cultural programmes of the PSC, *Cultural Flashes* is, in terms of structure, similar in each episode. In general, it breaks down into four sections of around the same length, about fifteen minutes each. This pattern remained constant over the entire period of study. *Cultural Flashes* starts with *Nabd al Balad* ('The Pulse of the Country'). Two young presenters, Amani Abu Hantash and Walid Al Sheikh, appear (shown in Image 5.3), casually but smartly dressed, and speak in elegant, classical Arabic as they begin a review of a range of cultural activities of the current week, taking place throughout the occupied Palestinian Territories (CF12). They stand in the studio together and present topics to the camera, including cultural events such as art exhibitions, music concerts and new movies. Occasionally, they show pre-recorded interviews done after these events had taken place and 'vox pop' random

interviews in which people share their - apparently unscripted - views on different topics. For example, after *Alice in Wonderland*, an American fantasy movie, was screened during Christmas (CF22), pre-recorded interviews, conducted with members of the Palestinian Christian Arab community who had watched the film and expressed their views on it, were shown. This interactive element is a common feature of the programme.

The second part of the programme is *Dot Thaqafa* ('Dot Culture'). This is about a range of cultural activities that can be found on-line. This section of the programme often starts with some poetry or other writings being recited. The presenters (the same young ones as before) review websites that carry cultural content. They check Palestinian and other Arab websites for news that is of interest in relation to Palestinian national culture. For example, a news flash at elalimbaratur.com reflected on the anniversary of the death of French novelist and playwright Jean Genet, who was praised for his work on bringing French literature to the world (CF19 and CF22). When love poems are read out, for example by Moroccan or Egyptian poets, the links are also provided in the programme, and links to translations – if available - are provided for texts in English. Further time may be spent introducing YouTube videos of related songs, music, theatre, and other artistry, depending on how relevant they are to the theme of that particular show (CF07).

Fe el Baal ('In the Mind'), the third part of the programme, involves one of the two presenters talking about the biography of a particular individual, a cultural figure, celebrity, poet, artist, novelist or musician, for example. National novelist and storyteller Mahmoud Shukair was invited on the show to talk about his travel, his experiences, and about what had shaped his experiences (CF08). This is usually followed by short, pre-recorded interviews by the same presenter, with people who have been closely associated with the person, and who then share their views on that particular person, mentioning his/her position and achievements in enriching Palestinian culture. People thus profiled have something in common: most of them are dead writers and poets. When it comes to interviews, the guests who are invited to comment have no specific collective label; they are scholars, journalists and cultural administrators of all sorts (CF 03, CF 14 and CF 16).

In the last section of the show, 'Reportage,' the two presenters return and present both in-studio interviews and interviews pre-recorded

outside the studio, usually with one or more creative figures with distinguished cultural achievements in the general field of the arts in Palestine. An example was literary critic Dr. Mai Naief, who talked about Gaza-born poet Hasseb Al Qadi (CF22). People invited for the interviews could include visual artists, literary figures, poets, musicians and dancers, or those working in the arts and culture in a more general sense. For example, there were the drama teams in Jerusalem, who came on the show to talk about their ability to resist Israeli occupation by acting in Palestinian drama (CF18). The interviewees are given the opportunity to discuss their work and to comment on the origin and development of their creative, social and academic self. The show concludes with what can be considered a 'cultural critique' of the arts (CF13).

In *Burning Brands*, Younies Abu Jarad, a young poet and TV presenter, who is also the producer of the show, appears in formal attire, with tie and jacket, in the stage setting of a 'faux' library. His language is formal, classical Arabic. This show is structured quite differently from its *Cultural Flashbes* counterpart. Every week there are new guests, one or two professors, poets or writers, to comment on literature, especially literature of resistance, whether classical or contemporary, originally written in Arabic or translated into Arabic by a Muslim writer. Sometimes the individuals or writers who are discussed, or appear themselves, are from the Palestinian diaspora. Their aim might be to re-visit Palestinianism through, for example, poetry. Examples of guests invited to the show are: Izz-ddin Al Manasra from Jordan (BB09) and Dr Samir Al Omary (BB20), or Arab writers calling for the awakening of Arabism, such as Egyptian poet of the South Ahmed Bakheet (BB23), Saleem Aladdin of Lebanon (BB16), Mohannad Al Sari of Jordan (BB11) and Hassan Al Beidi of Syria (BB7). The programme is usually preceded by an advertisement for the military wing of Hamas, for a culture-related event, such as Islamic music, or for a documentary, based, for example, on the life of a Palestinian martyr shot by Israeli snipers (BB21). Within the programme, there is no sub-division into sections; the whole hour is in a talk-show format, in which the host plays the pivotal role.

5.4.2 The Form of Cultural Flashes, and Burning Brands

Before we continue in Chapter 6 to analyse content, it is important to appreciate the variations in the form of the selected programmes in terms of their broad organisation and structure.

In *Cultural Flashes* and *Burning Brands*, as mentioned before, there is a new guest, a professor, a poet, or a writer, every week. Inviting national and international figures onto the programme is very much part of *Burning Brands*, which focuses on local and regional artists as sources for the value of Arab nationalism and resistance. *Cultural Flashes* invites national and international guests, including American poets like Rita Dove, one of the most important Afro-American voices (CF15). She was introduced in a way that made viewers understand the significance of the Pulitzer Prize in the international arena, and that focused on her form of resistance, which is writing about discrimination against black Americans on US public transportation. International poet voices are combined with Palestinian voices, in Gaza. The presenter, Amani Abu Hantash, introduced weblinks offering references to Danish literature, Indian and US writers, Dutch poets and Spanish intellectuals. During one report on cultural activities, a video-shot of a restaurant where a cultural event – an art auction – took place in Jerusalem, was shown – with a bottle of wine in clear view (CF17). This kind of secular portrayal, with alcohol on display, is absent in ASC's *Burning Brands*.

The host may begin by – for example – introducing a guest as ‘a revolutionary poet in the face of injustice’ (BB15). In a rather long ‘appetiser’ talk about the guest of the programme – including how he stood up against injustice at a time when other intellectuals were silent – the *Burning Brands* presenter introduced an Egyptian poet, Hamed Abu Ahmed (BB14) by reading some of his poetry. This poetry praises the people of Gaza for their steadfastness under, and resistance against, the siege. Another speaker – Abdelrahman Yousef – joined the conversation via live-feed screen against a background of Cairo's crowded streets. The poet opened his greeting to the viewers by saying: ‘with your Jihad, you are alive, and with our indifference we are dead’ (BB22). The presenter offered the guest a chance to describe his 20 years of writing poetry, after which the guest began to outline how injustice, oppression and war are the seeds which feed a poet ‘bird.’ *Burning Brands* perhaps appeals most to a young generation of intellectuals and artists, who are invited to follow the steps taken by the guests – for example when the guest tells

that his poetry was inspired by the American invasion of Iraq, in 2003. This was a decisive moment in his life, when he decided 'to shoot all bullets from me with whatever weapons available to me' (BB22) and turned his poetry toward politics. When asked whom he aimed to shoot these poetic bullets at, the guest replied that his target was the 'enemies of the Ummah, both inside and out.'

The presenter of *Burning Brands* asked to what extent the guest was able to combine politics with art, by using political satire to express the situation in the Arab world, with a specific focus on Arab, Egyptian and Palestinian national suffering. The discussion deepened with the recitement of some poetry, titled 'The Enemy says,' written by the guest, and subject to regional critiques. Asked about the motives behind his poem, he said that the inspiration came from a text published by Israeli newspapers on an 'expired Palestinian Authority chairman Mahmoud Abbas,' who delayed in signing parts of agreements and protocols, causing him to be rebuffed in public by the then US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice. The poem said that he had waited too long for the PA to deny this news, while it was already reaching the Arab and international press, convincing him that this news was accurate (BB22).

The enemy says,
though the enemy is professional in lies
since time immemorial

The enemy says,
and some of our enemy is a friend of yours,
without shame

The enemy says
that you have signed all documents,
when you were rebuffed

The enemy talks like a fox
and you kept silent,
and practiced the role of lamb

We have always known you in despair with close brothers,
but the enemy says
that you have patience on humiliation
which is more than the patience of a camel.

The enemy says,
 and some of the words of the enemy condemn the victim,
 that you are the best partner for peace'

The guest poet goes on to recognise the work of Mahmoud Darwish, but admits he did not agree with Darwish's politics. However, he expresses his hope for national reconciliation, just before the *Burning Brands* host announces a break, with continued discussion to follow. The *Burning Brands* interval starts with a camera filming in alleys and tiny roads that look like a familiar part of Jerusalem, until the camera reaches the dome of the rock, surrounded by people holding Hamas flags on which is written: 'Oh Al Quds, what should I write about your streets, which get their lights from our blood.' There is another short break with footage of the United Nations Security Council, as the (Palestinian) speaker asks the Council members: 'how come you are silent? When will the time come that you move and feel... my country is suffering the pain, but will anyone help?' This is followed by film footage of dead children, a closed Rafah Crossing gate and people running away from their homes, and of fighter jets and bulldozers demolishing homes. In contrast, the 3 intervals during a 4-part *Cultural Flashes* episode just show a plain blue-sky background with the programme title on top. Here, the break just seems to serve as a rest pause for the viewers. No commercials are shown.

In PSC's *Cultural Flashes*, when leading Palestinian figures such as author and globetrotter Mahmoud Shukair (CF08) and Sameh Al Qassim (CF04) were invited to share their experiences, the host of the show reminded them of comparisons and contrasts between Palestinian life and life outside Palestine. Shukair highlighted that, while living in Prague, he felt close to Jerusalem, but then talked about the 'faith of fences,' and walls that separate nations, as being impediments to understanding. Shukair shared his experience of visiting Berlin for the first time in 1976, as the Palestinian representative for a cultural event. He discussed the Berlin wall, of which Israel's separation wall now reminded him. The discussion moved quickly from culture to politics, as Shukair mentioned a farmer waiting for an Israeli soldier to open the gate so the farmer could access his own land. He also mentioned students struggling every day to get to and from school safely. The discussion went on to touch on Shukair's theories, ideologies and his view of the world. He explained

that, as he matured, he freed himself from some of the mistaken ideas he had had before.

However, his socialist idealism remained unabated in his work, which is constantly preoccupied with questions of social justice, and with defending people's interests and their dignity against occupiers and colonial greed (CF08). Shukair was given considerable screen-time to share his experience of belonging to Palestine. He described how, while sitting in a café in Europe, he does not feel as strongly inspired to write about the main characters in his short story entitled 'the daughter of Arab town' as when sitting in a place in his homeland. A stay of 18 years in Amman had offered Shukair time to write a bundle of famous short stories about women. Many of these stories were inspired by the fact that he was in exile in Amman.

Both *Cultural Flashes* and *Burning Brands* share similar in-depth interview settings with their guests during the programme. For example, Shukair talked about cultural life prior to the establishment of Israel in 1948, when Palestinian culture was more accessible to the outside world, through cultural seminars, concerts, events, all of which suffered from the events of 1948 and from the Nakba. Neighbouring cities like Baghdad, Cairo and Beirut became leading in Arab culture, while Palestine's role became marginal. He also acknowledged the role that Israeli occupation plays in imposing Israeli culture on Palestinians, and termed this as a 'cultural invasion,' cancelling Palestinian culture and identity. Defactionalisation in the content of *Cultural Flashes* can be seen in the overt focus on national agendas and goals, the condemnation of the occupation and the call for national unity. For example, this happens when a guest like Shukair is asked how much effort the Ministry of Culture makes to defend Palestinian culture in the face of Israeli culture.

Co-presenter Walid Al Sheikh started the next part of the episode (CF08) by discussing Palestinian public figures, such as cartoonist Naji Al-Ali, who was assassinated in London in 1987. He brought experts familiar with his work into the show for an interview. Values like resistance are discussed in *Cultural Flashes*, but are presented more in video frames and images than in words. An example is one of Naji Al-Ali's cartoons in which Handala is holding a Kalashnikov rifle. His back is turned toward the viewer. The expert in the show once asked Naji Al-Ali why Handala always shows his back in the cartoon, and never his

face. Al-Ali explained to him that this posture of Handala was symbolic of the fact that all Palestinians are excluded and their basic rights are denied. In here lies a distinction between *Cultural Flashes* and *Burning Brands*. The first tends to use indirect reference to resistance, while the second uses every opportunity to praise resistance, in a direct way.

There are also points of similarity between the two shows. *Cultural Flashes*, like *Burning Brands*, presents cultural norms and habits that are known to almost every Palestinian. These are explained, for example, in interviews, so that it becomes clear why people see life in a certain way. For example, in *Burning Brands*, an Egyptian poet, Ahmed Bakheet, is asked by the presenter to describe the reasoning and inspiration behind his poems on Arab nationalism (BB23).

Another point of similarity between *Burning Brands* and *Cultural Flashes* is how they combine the Palestinian cultural scene with the political context. For example, *Cultural Flashes* presenter Amani Abu Hantash introduced a report on a man and a woman struggling to retain valid Palestinian cultural identity within the controls of the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem – some videos showed the 1947 Nakba (catastrophe), the Arab refugee camps, Palestinian heritage, Dabka and music. But most importantly, the report contained the entire narrative of conflict and survival in a city that is witness to all forms of violence and suppression (including taxes imposed by Israel on Palestinian cultural organisations after Jerusalem was announced as the capital of Arab culture in 2010). The content of the programme, although mainly focused on cultural activities, cannot help but include how much Palestinian culture is hindered by politics and occupation as mentioned in CF11, or by absence of the newspapers that were shut down under Israeli occupation.

Both programmes displayed a similar topic in announcing the availability of new books on Gaza and the West Bank. *Burning Brands* also covered a media evolution event focused on new media in Palestine, in which Islamic figures and scholars, close to the rhetoric of Hamas, appeared without any discrimination toward political affiliation. Similar to the Lebanese TV of Hezbollah, which held campaigns to unify the Lebanese people in a situation of conflict (Harb, 2011), *Burning Brands* brought the topic of a union for writers, established as an umbrella group aiming at reunification of Palestinian intellectuals and artists in Palestine and the diaspora. The first speaker in the programme, Dr

Atallah Abulsebah (now former Minister of Justice,) began one of his ASC appearances by greeting the Palestinian people on the occasion of the second anniversary of Israel's war on Gaza. He expressed his hopes for national unity and some 'middle way' (BB19). The emergence of a 'unifying' discourse reflects an acknowledgment of a rise of Fatah-affiliated authors in a way that is non-threatening to Hamas (Gitlin, 1980).

5.6 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, a broad comparison of elements of programme set-up between the ASC and the PSC has been made. The visions and constraints implied in specific production decisions will be elaborated in more detail in Chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 6 deals with children's programmes, in terms of their thematic content, and in Chapter 7 the content of episodes of both the ASC's and PSC's cultural programmes will be considered.

In line with the main focus of this research, the compromises made in production decisions will be analysed further in relation to defactionalisation (Chapter 6). Whereas this chapter has dealt mainly with producers' decisions on the programming content, the following chapter will build on samples gathered from more detailed content analysis and on frequency measurements. The aim is to see how this helps us to more fully understand the complex processes involved in media defactionalisation.

6

'Circuits of Media': Analysing the Content of Children's Programmes

'Regardless of the political affiliation of our guests, in children's ... programming, we leave it up to our producers to decide, so long as they do not give guests the chance to attack Islamic principles - programming can be defactionalised as long as it is within acceptable limits' (Interview: Abu Mohsen, ASC, 6 December 2013).

6.1 Introduction

A key aim of this study is to explain how a number of themes covered by selected Palestinian satellite TV programmes, from both the ASC and the PSC, can be related to contextual factors that influence the production processes of these programmes. One important variable in this analysis is the frequency of media messages that are transmitted to the public by way of the four selected programmes. This chapter will present a more detailed content analysis around key themes, and scrutinise the results of that analysis for signs of factionalism and defactionalised content. In the analysis, the selected children's programme of the ASC will be compared with that of the PSC. In Chapter 7, a similar thing will be done for the two selected cultural programmes. Themes that cover different kinds of values were selected, and their choice drew quite extensively on the interviews already conducted with media producers in Gaza and West Bank. The overall conclusions from this content analysis exercise are presented later in Chapter 7.

As explained in Chapters 1 and 3, the main themes selected with field supervisors for the content analysis are: nationalism, resistance, citizens' rights, religious values, cultural values, social values, political values, educational values and entertainment; nine in total. The incidence of these themes is first identified and then related to how media

factionalism may have started to be overcome in practice, in the programming of both the ASC and the PSC. As explained in Chapter 5, this chapter and Chapter 7 continue to deal with the second central research question, which is about the most frequently present – and most absent – among the themes used in the analysis of the content of children's and cultural programmes. D'Acci's 'circuits of media' framework is used once more, and tables of the results of the detailed content analysis are presented. Each theme is analysed in terms of its frequency of appearance within the various episodes of the selected programmes (for Tables of the results for all 4 programmes see Appendix 6). The emphasis in this chapter is on placing the broad content of the programmes within the wider context of media production, and show how the 'defactionalised' political climate in Palestine has influenced media producers' decisions.

As explained in Chapters 1 and 3, a total of 88 television episodes were viewed several times, and then finally analysed in terms of content along thematic lines (Episodes: 23 of *Sesame Street*, 23 of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, 21 of *Cultural Flashes* and 21 of *Burning Brands*.) This viewing required detailed note taking on the contents of each episode, viewed over several weeks. Content analysis was then supplemented by interviews with the key producers of the satellite TV's children's and cultural programmes.

Answering the questions as outlined has required a focus on the thematic content analysis, especially around frequencies of selected themes related to different sets of values (see Chapter 1.7 and Chapter 3.4). At the end of the chapter, we return to Gans's and Gitlin's approach to the analysis of media content, and pick up again, from Chapter 3.6, the five key influences on media producers and, hence, also on programme and episode content. These include attitudinal and personal influences, as well as institutional, political and ideological influences. This chapter deals mainly with content-related themes central to defactionalisation. However, it is important to first mention how production is organised in both the PSC and the ASC. In this way, the results of the specific thematic content analysis can be linked back to the broader theoretical concerns of the study, towards the end of the chapter. The results of the content analysis are presented in a series of

tables, the most important of which are presented in the text, while the others are placed in Appendix 6.

6.2 Themes in PSC's & ASC's Children's Programme Content

In this long section of the chapter, the themed media content of the four selected programmes is first presented and discussed in the form of frequency-of-(theme-) occurrence tables. For each of the four programmes, this part of the chapter will provide an overview, followed by a deeper analysis around each theme. Each programme is considered separately first, followed by an overall synthesis. Each theme around a specific set of values is considered in turn, first for the two children's programmes and then for the two cultural programmes. This comparative analysis will later help in understanding how and to what extent a programme is fictional in content. When discussing individual examples of programme production, connections will be made with the factors mentioned earlier, namely cultural artifacts, production processes and the broader socio-historical context. The aim is to highlight the most prominent and the least apparent themes, in terms of their frequency of occurrence, over the observed period of March 2009 to January 2010.

In relation to the two children's programmes, *Sesame Street* and *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the two tables below show that educational values are the most frequently occurring themes, in both programmes. They can be viewed in relation to Tables 10 and 28 (Appendix 6), presented earlier in this study, which showed the overall frequency of themes across all the ASC's and PSC's programmes, and was accompanied by a justification of the process of theme selection. The educational values theme appears in 100 percent of the *Sesame* episodes and 87 percent of the *Pioneers* episodes. However, there is a marked difference between the two programmes in terms of how important the theme of 'entertainment' is.

Table 6.1
Themes in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* in order of frequency (23 episodes)

Category	No (%)	Yes (%)
Educational values	13	87
Social values	48	52
Religious values	69.5	30.5
Nationalism and National Discourse	82.5	17.5
Entertainment	82.5	17.5
Resistance and Resistance Literature	91	9
Citizens' Rights and Obligations	100	-
Cultural values	100	-
Political values	100	-

Table 6.2
Themes in *Sesame Street* in order of frequency (23 episodes)

Category	No (%)	Yes (%)
Educational values		100
Entertainment		100
Social values	48	52
Nationalism and National Discourse	87	13
Cultural values	91	9
Religious values	96	4
Citizens' Rights and Obligations	100	
Resistance and Resistance Literature	100	
Political values	100	

Whereas education is a theme in every single *Sesame Street* episode, it appears in less than one fifth of the episodes of *Pioneers*. This indicates a significant difference between the ASC and the PSC in terms of how

children's programmes are produced (see also Appendix 6). This contrast is discussed later in this chapter.

6.3 Thematic Content of the Children's Programmes

Considering how the *Palestinian Satellite Channel* (PSC) and the *Al Aqsa Satellite Channel* (ASC) communicate around the identified themes in relation to values within children's programme content, is a useful exercise. It may indicate to what extent satellite TV content in these children's programmes can be considered as polarising and factional, or, on the contrary, as "defactionalised", within the research period of March 2009 to January 2010. For each theme, the frequency of appearance is now analysed. After that, the overall findings are theorised in a sub-section, before the chapter moves on to consider the occurrence of the same themes in ASC and PSC cultural programmes.

6.3.1 Nationalism and national discourse

In both ASC and PSC programmes, the theme of nationalism appears in the form of occasional references to Palestinian villages attacked, destroyed and occupied by Israel since 1947, and in the form of references to the right to return of refugees. Despite the quite broad definition of nationalism, this theme hardly appeared in the episodes of either children's programme, as Tables 10 and 28 (Appendix 6) show. In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, just under one fifth (17.5%) of all episodes focused on themes around nationalism. Slightly fewer (13%) of the *Sesame Street* episodes explicitly referred to nationalist values. Both figures are low, however, and the difference between them is relatively minor, suggesting that both programmes were fairly depoliticised. As Tables 10 and 28 indicate, the programmes focus very strongly on education and, in the case of the PSC, also on entertainment. In the section below an effort is made to explore why this lack of nationalist content occurs, and what this means.

The appearance of nationalism as a theme in content can be interpreted as an indication of the demise of factionalism among political parties in Palestine. Thus, when children in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* use in-studio songs, such as 'Returning to my homeland ... to the green land I am returning' (PoT19), it emphasises what Palestinians have in common; it does not refer to just one part of Palestine, or to one set of political

leaders in one part, but to all of Palestine and its people and (former) territory. The producers of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, through Sara's scripted words, also reminded their audience of the anticipated, eventual return to Al Quds, and of a future in which Palestinians will be able to pray freely in the Al Aqsa mosque. As Sara said: 'we remind you. We are the pioneers who will liberate Al-Aqsa and prisoners...' Then Nassur interrupted with the statement that 'this call is not only for children of Palestine, but for all Arab children... I will fly to Al Quds on this carpet, but you need to promise me that you will teach the children about Al Quds' (PoT15). The children were then told that each time they hear the daily call for the Adhan prayers, 'Rise up for success ... Rise up for salvation,' they should think about their eventual return to their homeland (PoT03).

In the PSC's *Sesame Street*, nationalism and national discourse were not quite as apparent as in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. The PSC's relevant background images included both churches and mosques. The ASC used only mosques as symbols of religious and cultural values. Images from actual Palestinian homes were also occasionally used by both channels in their children's programmes. During the specific period of the study, in both programmes, dialogues referred to traditional clothing, culture and recipes, endorsing themes of nationalism and nationalist discourse.

In episode 20 of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, entitled 'The love of nationhood,' the light-brown puppet Nassur said to child-host Sara and ten other children in the studio: 'Our beloved children, we remind you of Jaffa, Akko, Tal Al Rabi (Tel Aviv), Lid and Ramla and the rest of the towns that are occupied by the Zionists' (PoT20). While saying this, the puppet bit his fingers anxiously. The reference here was to names of pre-occupation Palestinian villages and cities, unlikely to be known to some of the younger children who watched the programme. The Palestinian names of these towns were certainly familiar to the well-informed and articulate girl child-host Sara, in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, who spoke with self-confidence when expressing earlier: 'We will liberate Al Quds and prisoners' (PoT15). The producers of the programme had the puppet Nassur make a statement that enabled Sarah to respond with an overtly political statement about the nation. Nassur whispered in Sara's ear his desire to migrate and leave Palestine. 'Where to?' asked Sara. After outlining the reasons why he wanted to leave, including the Israeli

blockade, the destruction of the area around his home, and his miserable existence amidst the killings in Gaza, Nassur stated that he was tired of this life and wanted to leave the Gaza Strip. Sara then started to correct him, emphasising that ‘the Zionists have us like a ring on their finger,’ which refers to the overbearing control of Israel. Sara told Nassur that ‘we are the generation of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, and must hold on tightly to our land, our nation, our faith, and our love for our homeland will make us hold on more tightly to it’ (PoT20).

In the same episode, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* presented a children’s story of an old, bony horse enjoying a peaceful life in his garden, and a younger one deciding to go and live somewhere else. The mother horse did not want the young horse to go and cried, but followed her son nevertheless. They soon felt sad and miserable and could not handle life away from their home and garden. The producers used this imagery to strengthen feelings of national belonging, and plant in children’s minds the idea that leaving their ancestral homeland would cause them to face all kinds of difficulties in a land where they would not fully belong. Without their national identity, ‘no one allows them to stay’ or makes them feel welcome. This rhetorical story summarises the plight of Palestinian refugees in other Arab states and in Europe. The story delivered the message that leaving one’s homeland is never a solution to one’s status as a victim, whatever the living conditions are, at home or in exile. Sara concluded that ‘the one who leaves his nation will live as a stranger.’

One PSC *Sesame Street* episode (SS04) introduced a child who referred to another child whose father was in prison. Unlike what was said in the conversation between Sara and Nassur in the ASC programme, in this case there was no further discussion on which prison the father was in, or why the father was there. The child was allowed to express how much he missed his father and the conversation then simply shifted to another topic. This appears to be a form of compromise, which the PSC has made to avoid content that becomes purely political in its values, perhaps in response to suggestions from editors or funders. One cannot assume that such compromises occur by themselves without competing forces influencing them. According to field producer Abu Shammalah: ‘After all, we wish to produce our episodes in specific ways, but there are factors that do not enable us to do exactly what we want, so we are subjected to external factors’ (Interview: Abu Shammalah, 2013).

Both the ASC's and the PSC's children programme showed quite a low frequency for nationalism and national discourse. This suggests that compromises and avoidance of political values are things that are shared by both TV satellite channels. In *Sesame Street*, for example, there was one episode (SS14) that featured the appearance of a child, Noureldeen, who took children from the show to see his city, Jerusalem. When they passed by the Dome of the Rock, a clear example of a prominent national and iconic cultural artifact and a symbol of religious resistance, the dialogue did not have an overly political or national flavour. Noureldeen introduced the streets of the old city by saying: 'This is my house, it is 500 years old.' The children then all moved on to the market to buy labneh, olive oil and thyme. These locally produced foods are also cultural artifacts in which Palestinians take national pride, like the sesame bread of Jerusalem. However, when the child talked about danger, he referred to the traffic and the possibility of being run over. He did not talk of the violence of settlers, of forced evacuations of Palestinians from their homes by Israeli forces or of any of the other, more political, dangers to Palestinians and their sense of national belonging.

The lack of Palestinian nationalist values (and concepts) in the PSC's *Sesame Street* it is significant, surely given the fact that the programme was almost entirely funded from the US, from 2008 until 2012. It suggests that USAID, through its funding for *Sesame Street*, supported the depoliticisation of children's programmes, countering the more explicit political line of Hamas's children's TV programmes, especially *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. Although production took place in Palestine, the producers were limited with respect to what they could show or say.

When the low frequency results for nationalist discourse were shared with the Head of Programming at the PSC, Al Shafi, he was surprised. He suggested that perhaps the lack of a nationalistic perspective or emphasis should be considered 'a default,' something to be remedied in the PSC's programming in the future (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). He admitted, however, that for the PSC's programming any direct mentioning of nationalism or national discourse is viewed as being political and therefore tends to be avoided (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). Al Shafi also speculated that the production team may make a conscious decision to try and avoid the topic of nationalism, as talk about this topic will result in very different understandings of what 'nationalism' really

means, whether a form of mixed secular nationalism or another variant of nationalism with an Islamic flavour.

This difficulty of handling nationalist values does not help the cause of defactionalisation, because the focus is on avoiding all political values, including the Israeli occupation itself. Al Shafi suggested that the producers may have been mistaken in not dealing with vital thematic content like national identity and Palestinians' sense of belonging. 'We have no problem in involving children in the idea of nationhood, Jerusalem, Palestine, and all the nationalistic ideas that we were raised on,' he insisted (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013).

What was interesting in the ASC's broadcasting was that, whilst nationalist content was mostly missing from episodes of children's programmes, it emerged quite consistently during breaks. It was observed that national values and anthems were present in 87% of the breaks (see the disruption in episode 06 in Appendix 6). Songs relating to nationalism and nationhood were introduced with a lead-in video of an elderly man stating: 'I swear to God, if you were to give me all the world's palaces instead of my home, I would not accept it,' while he showed documents proving ownership of his home, that was occupied in 1948, when Israel declared itself a state (PoT21).

In the ASC programme, the discussion was not confined to the studio, but started to reach further afield, as when Sara took the first call from a child of Palestinian origin, living in the United Arab Emirates, who emphasised that she wanted to come back, with her entire family, to settle in Palestine. National discourse was present in the support for Palestinian resilience and a commitment to stay in Palestine, as a means to reinforce the right of return of millions of Palestinian refugees. In this context, the producers focused on shaming the Puppet Nassur who expressed his wish to leave Gaza (PoT 20).

One original feature of PSC children's programming are the phone-ins by children from inside and outside Palestine. Whenever children either appear as guests or phone into *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, they are asked which village in Palestine their family comes from. Guests in *Sesame Street* rarely get this question. This suggests that in relation to the research questions outlined at the start, nationalism and national discourse have tended to be more closely associated with ASC than with PSC during the period under observation. The emphasis on nationalism is not strong in either case, however, and this may be because of various forms of

compromise on the part of media producers, who wish to avoid being accused by Israel and Western countries of 'teaching children to hate' (Jüntzel, 2008).

Another episode (PoT19) of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* focused on the history of the Nakba (catastrophe) of 1947-8 and referred to Palestinian cities that 'will not be forgotten,' according to Sara, who presented a show marking the 61st anniversary of the Nakba. The narrative is unsurprising, given Hamas's adherence to the principle of never exchanging land, and of never encouraging Palestinians to abandon their home and ancestral property. National discourse is also demonstrated by the loyalty shown by children toward the cause of Palestine. For example, one five-year old child, named Omar, called in from Saudi Arabia to say he had learned to love Palestine through *Pioneers of Tomorrow* and that he was waiting for the day his family would return to Palestine (PoT21). Whether he was coached to say this is not clear. The main point is that his comment was included in the programme. It was found that, during the selected period of analysis, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* producers tended to focus mostly on nationalism, and much less (than during the period before this research) on squabbling with rival Fatah. As explained before, even if more widely defined, nationalism is not as evident in the content as might be expected. This may be because of a decision to avoid touching on issues around 'factionalism.' The moment producers talk about 'nationalism' it is natural that they want to present their vision and perspective on what nationalism means. The PSC always uses the Palestinian Kuffiyeh (head scarf of the former Palestinian president) as the key symbol of nationalism '...and an important component of Palestinian culture,' as the presenter of the PSC's cultural programme said (CF01). The ASC does not use this scarf to represent the Palestinian nation, and prefers to have Hamas's green flag always present and visible. In ASC 's children's programming there seems to be more emphasis than is the case in PSC's children's programming on the Palestinian cause in general and the consequent 'fears for our precious nation,' as articulated by the puppet Nassur (episode PoT21).

The producers of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* seem to have decided to test children calling in from abroad to express their loyalty to Palestine. Far from reassuring and endorsing their views, the puppet Nassur challenged those who said they wanted to return, for example, by saying: 'But we

have destruction in Palestine!’ This provoked debate, in which the producers maintained the principle of nationalism by connecting it to the villages from where the telephoning children’s families originated. So, even though the children were too young to remember, or had never seen, their ancestral home, this was a method of linking them to their ancestral roots and pride of heritage. Clearly, this method was used to make them aware of their ancestral heritage, regardless of their present whereabouts, be it the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Hebron, Khan Younies, the Sultanate of Oman or Gaza City. In some ways, therefore, despite its lower budget, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* is more accessible and even more ‘democratic’ in its production process than *Sesame Street*, which is not open to live phone-ins from children viewing the programme.

In *Pioneers*, the puppet Nassur then confided his mistake, saying he too preferred to stay, after hearing the children call in from outside, saying how much they would like to be in Palestine and the extent to which they felt that they belonged there. During the episode mentioned, puppet Nassur did not allow participants to step outside the topic discussed, even though children might often switch rapidly from one topic to another. The conversation stuck to the expression of love for Palestine and the refusal to migrate abroad (PoT20 and PoT21).

In *Sesame Street*’s programming content, this kind of nationalist loyalty, in terms of sentiment, is complemented by another form of loyalty that consists of various types of artifacts and loyalties to Palestinians’ national heritage. The importance of national artifacts and the Palestinian socio-historical context as influences on the PSC’s media production decisions about content was notable in *Sesame Street* in the period under review. Firstly, two puppets, Haneen and Karim, were shown playing Palestinian scouts, demonstrating the first kind of nationalism through proud identification with historical Palestine (SS20). Secondly, Aya, a small Palestinian girl from the West Bank, was shown learning traditional Palestinian embroidery through a dialogue with her grandmother. The two discussed styles and colours and the girl wore a small *thobe* (an item of national dress) made by her grandmother (SS15). This encouraged children to proudly wear national dress and not see it as old-fashioned or only meant for elders. Another episode taught children to take pride in national recipes and cooking, such as homemade desserts made of grapes pressed against stones and rocks from the mountains, a process that

imparts a traditional, special taste to the resulting juice. These ideas were presented with children wearing traditional national costumes. As already noted, these kinds of folkloric garments are much more associated with the nationalism of Fatah than with that of Hamas, which shows no special attachment to such traditional clothing.

It does seem that restrictions demanded by donors influenced the silencing of nationalist discourse as a theme in PSC's children's programming. For example, in episode 06 of *Sesame Street*, when puppet Haneen came in with breaking news, he introduced five-year old Basil who had a 'document, declaring independence' (SS06). The term was taken out of its political context, and the episode was screened after President Arafat had presented the issue of independence to the United Nations General Assembly, and had, in resolution 43/177, gained 144 votes in favour of Palestinian independence (Boyle, 2013). In this context, the term 'independence' was mentioned with reference to Basil, but confined to him being able to brush his own teeth and wash his own dishes.

This was followed, however, by a scene in which Basil was in his parent's arms, waving a Palestinian flag. No direct reference was made to what had happened in the United Nations, although one could hardly avoid the suggestion that independence was not only an issue for Basil, as anthems were playing in the background, indicating Palestine. The producers were clearly avoiding direct verbal references to what was very clearly on their minds. However, in *Sesame Street* episode 11, producers decided to show a disabled Palestinian child flying a kite that was made out of the colours of the Palestinian flag (SS11). For Sayeigh (Interview: 2013), this was a conscious decision to integrate disabled children into the show.

This is a clear example of defactionalisation, where the PSC's producers, without directly blaming Israel, subtly pointed to the Declaration of Independence in a way that only adults could be expected to understand the significance of. The document of 'independence' is a major and iconic cultural artifact, as well as a symbol of the diplomatic struggles for international recognition of Palestinian statehood and nationhood (Palestinian National Council, 1988). Thus, although nationalist content was muted, the story lines in *Sesame Street* could be connected with the general efforts which the PA/Fatah were

undertaking at that time for recognition of statehood at the UN level. The compromise that was made here was an uneasy one. The PSC shifted from being a station that used to broadcast images of children throwing stones at Israeli soldiers, as a form of resistance to occupation, to being a station that made happy, peaceful children's programmes. The struggles of nationalism were confined to a few indirect hints and references to the programme's political surroundings, but always without appearing too aggressively nationalistic.

Compared with ASC, the PSC worked with a different sense of Palestinian national imagery. For example, non-veiled women were frequently depicted, both with and without children. Yet, the B-roll film shots from the past were not given any context, which reduced their direct link with Palestinians' identities and places. The closest indicator of nationalism was a quick video shot of the Palestinian flag and map in the background, during a children's song applauding the importance of friendship in two episodes (SS11 and SS05).

Palestine was also mentioned on a few occasions, such as when a child listener, Zyad Farah, from Deir el Balah in Gaza, was introduced. He was the Palestinian junior jumping champion, and at the end of the programme, Palestine was mentioned in the form of a local postal box address, where at that time children could send letters to *Sesame Street* (SS18). Despite the fact that the programme's introductory song started with 'Simsim our street, Simsim our neighbourhood, come visit our street and our neighbourhood,' there was no reference to where these fantasy streets or neighbourhoods were actually located. All the children who appeared in the programme came from elite schools and families. They formed a strange contrast with the children, shown, in one episode, in the audience, who were wearing UNRWA school uniforms that marked them as refugees living on aid supplied by international aid agencies (SS23).

Despite the fact that incidents with regard to nationalism values were not mentioned much in the analysed programmes, the researcher found it interesting to explore the references to nationalism, as this is a crucial point of departure for both the PSC and the ASC in the defactionalisation of media content. Both media outlets claim to stick to national agendas, and to avoid factional agendas.

6.3.2 Religious values

As shown in Tables 10 and 28 (Appendix 6), religious values appeared in just under one third (30.5%) of the 23 episodes of the ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow* that were analysed during the study period. This indicates a moderate focus on religious values within the episodes that were broadcast at that time. Over the same period, religious values appeared in just one of the 23 episodes of the PSC's *Sesame Street*. The ASC's higher level of content on religious values is understandable, given that Hamas claims to be 'Islamist' in orientation. Indeed, one would expect religious values to feature in more than a third of all episodes. During the research, this relatively low representation of religious values in thematic content was presented to the head of programming at the ASC. He found the results rather troubling since they implied that most content was secular in terms of themes handled. Compared to *Sesame Street*, however, the ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow* appears relatively strong on religious values. About half of all the religious content consisted of the use of Quranic verses, which the presenter Sara tended to quote in support of her arguments. In support of children during Ramadan, Sara said: 'We want all of us to read the Holy Quran during Ramadan and there are some people who have read it twice and three times in a month' (PoT04). She also informed the children that they should attend the five daily prayers at the mosque. Similarly, she reminded them that honouring one's parents and demonstrating integrity and honesty in one's actions are part of a religious duty for all Muslims (PoT23).

It may seem surprising that even one *Sesame Street* episode carried a religious message. However, references to religious values in *Sesame Street* came in the quite different form of introducing a character's neighbourhood, in Jerusalem. In one episode, a Palestinian boy pointed to the Church of the Resurrection as an important holy site for Christians. He then pointed to the Al Aqsa mosque as being a holy place for Muslims (SS14). In contrast with this (rare) pointing to religious places, in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* these holy sites were presented much more explicitly as 'prisoners,' symbols of occupation in the hands of Israel, and as areas which should be freed. 'We will remain, we will remain, we will remain as much as the thyme and olive remain....,' Sara said in PoT15.

In *Sesame Street*, both content and production are less controversial than in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. The PSC's children's programmes refer to a

multi-cultural reality that is close to the dominant ideology of the PA and Fatah. Whereas the media producers of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* appear to have made a deliberate decision to engage, to some extent, in religious values, the producers of *Sesame Street* appear to have decided not to do so. For instance, in the ASC's programmes, children were explicitly urged to read and memorize the Quran (the Holy Book). For example, one participant contributed to the show by citing Quran verses from Surat Al Shajar ("The Trees") (PoT02) and the Hadith ("The Sayings of the Prophet Mohammed"). These texts were said to give examples of how children need to be honest, and also take responsibility for the well-being of the natural environment. The names of Islamic messengers and ancestors were presented as being the mentors and pioneers for Palestinian children to follow. ASC children's programme relied on the sayings of the Prophet Mohammed in around one tenth of the episodes observed. Usually, such Hadith were referred to in passing, to support values and arguments about people, family and environment, that affect children. 'Prophet Mohammed, Peace be Upon Him, said, Allah is clean and likes cleanness, he is generous and likes generosity' (PoT02). In one episode of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the significance of Eid al Adha was reflected upon, followed by attention to the annual Hajj/pilgrimage when approximately 5 million Muslims travel to Mecca for rites of worship: 'We love this Eid more than Eid Al Fitr as we slaughter a sheep' (PoT02). This children's education included the relevance and importance of sacrificing animals at Eid Al Adha, distributing the meat and offering Zakat (charity or alms) to poor people, during the holy month of Ramadan. On other occasions, the topics delved deeper into lessons on the migration of Prophet Mohammed from Mecca to Medina, as mentioned in the same episode (PoT02).

During sessions of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, sometimes cartoons were shown of a small child helping his sick mother by bringing her drink water and medicine. This represented an extra responsibility for the child, but it was stressed that his kindness was appreciated; the mother replied, saying: 'May God bless and reward you' (PoT17). This kind of additional responsibility of children, rooted in religious values, was not present in *Sesame Street*, where there was no thematic use of the Hadith and the emphasis was on a happy childhood, largely free of responsibilities. Some of the reasons for this contrast relate to the

different ideas of Hamas and the PA/Fatah on the role of religion in children's lives.

It is also worth mentioning that the PSC producer of *Sesame Street* herself is a Christian and quite secular in her views (field notes, December 9, 2013). This may result in an increased tendency not to focus upon religious values in the programme. At ASC, however, religious beliefs are explicitly core to the values of the production team; the producer himself was raised within a predominantly Islamic society and is proud of his commitment to regular prayers at the mosque (Interview: Al Amriti, 2013).

To highlight the contrast between the two approaches, one religious and the other more secular, Al Shafi, head of PSC's programming in Gaza (Interview: 2013), admitted in an interview that more direct religious content could potentially appeal to new children not previously attracted to *Sesame Street*. He said: 'Avoiding religious terms in a religious society is not the right way to go, if we want to attract new children to our programmes' (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). An interesting observation was made with regard to the values of courtesy. In *Sesame Street*, the behaviour of the puppets suggested that one could visit neighbours and friends at any time, without giving advance notice or being invited. There were no restrictions, and it was not seen as rude to simply 'drop in' on your hosts (SS13).

Courteous behaviour is the responsibility of the visited, but not necessarily of the visitors. In contrast, in the ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the Quran was used as an explicit guide for good behaviour. Children were advised that visitors arriving in a household should respect the convenience of the hosts, and should consider returning later, at an agreed time, if that would be more convenient for the hosts (PoT16). This may seem a like minor point, but it does show how religious values can be translated into educational messages and how secularism can imply different ways of behaving. Cultural norms should not be taken for granted in either sense.

6.3.3 Citizens' rights

The content analysis showed that both the PSC and the ASC had a zero frequency-of-occurrence with regard to coverage of the theme of citizens' rights and obligations (see Appendix 6, Tables 10 and 28).

Perhaps it is not that surprising that talk of rights is negligible or non-existent in children's programmes since, even for adults, rights frameworks are not commonly discussed in the Palestinian media (Allen, 2013).

In interviews, it was suggested by producers that this absence of the theme of citizens' rights might have resulted from a miscommunication between producers planning their programme and the production executives responsible for reviewing the final programme in order to meet the needs of the intended audience. This kind of explanation offered by the producers seems a little unconvincing. Indeed, as Allen (2013) has suggested, talk about rights is hardly ever taken seriously in the local Palestinian context and tends to be met with scepticism. The term 'human rights' has become almost a joke in Gaza in particular, to a point that when the term 'children's rights' is used, people will tend to ask sarcastically what children's rights mean if children are maimed and killed by missiles. This scepticism, which the researcher noticed in many conversations with media producers, is also something mentioned in a recent study on the question of human rights in Palestine (Allen, 2013).

In interviews, producers of both the ASC and the PSC expressed the view that the lack of any explicit reference to citizenship rights, especially those of children, was an error that should be amended in the future. Their insistence on this point was not entirely convincing, however, given the lack of belief in the ability of human rights to make a difference in the specific context of occupation in Palestine (Allen, 2013). This strengthens the view that producers are part of a wider community affected by a deteriorating level of human rights, and that discussing these rights publicly in the media would not bring about much change.

Strangely, animal rights are given somewhat more attention than children's rights, as a theme. For example, in *Sesame Street* (SS05), producers focused on animal/pet care and physical interaction with pets through play. By contrast, in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the producer's ideology does not advocate direct physical contact with dogs, besides general kindness, due to the fact that, in some Islamic teaching, dogs are considered dirty animals and even *haram*, so that close contact with them should be avoided. There was one mention in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* of being good to animals, in this case bees, which are needed for pollination purposes (PoT17). One *Sesame Street* episode, on the other hand, had a

story about a West Bank boy, Hamza Motasem, who cared for three dogs. The message in the episode was that children should have a caring and responsible attitude, and properly look after their domestic animals. According to Hamza:

'I like to keep my dogs clean, exactly like human beings, that's why I give them a bath. Every day in the morning before going to school I offer them food and water and when I am back I feed them, play with them and go for a walk with them. My father has made a special house for them to sleep in at night. I love all my dogs, but Roy is my favourite friend... my brother also loves cats, and animals are an important part of the family that we should take good care of' (SS05).

No similar mention is made in any episode of adults' obligations to protect their children's rights, or, indeed, of Israel's responsibilities and obligation to care for children under occupation. Perhaps producers did not overtly address the theme of citizens' rights because that would be seen as political or confrontational. Alternatively, this theme may simply not be seen as relevant to the lives of many children living under military occupation. Through indirect means, however, and through the metaphors found in children's literature and in *hadith* about social and family responsibilities, children are reminded in the programmes, especially in the ASC programme, of their civic duties as members, albeit younger members, of society.

Sometimes stories are used in which animals seem to represent vulnerability in general. In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, in an attempt to teach children something about vulnerability, a horse was mentioned. This horse decided to go to greener land, and away from his mom. As a result of that decision, he was feeling lonely and lived unhappily abroad. In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, ideas about rights are more often expressed as obligations, for example the obligation of Muslims to treat friends and neighbours politely and respectfully. After a fight between Haneen, Kareem and their guest Abbas over a guitar, Kareem suggested: 'Let's make a deal that we don't fight, but we all share the guitar and play on it.' Haneen agreed to the offer as long as she was the first to play on it. After some reflection, Haneen and the guest said 'we agree' and then they started to share and play together (SS12). In *Sesame Street*, themes of being friendly, loyal and cooperative appear often, suggesting values that imply respect for one another's rights.

A very fundamental reason why citizenship and rights may not be addressed in the programmes is that raising themes around rights in the first place means that a host of problems associated with the occupation by Israel would also need to be addressed. Some of the programmes' producers, aware of Palestinian children's suffering in recent decades, may have '...learned from production mistakes of the past' (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013; Al Shafi, 2013). To avoid dealing with issues of water, health, food, travel and freedom of movement, it may be safer for producers not to insist on covering the theme of citizens' rights. Even if not all producers recognise this as such, it can be seen as making a kind of compromise that can have a positive effect on the defactionalisation of media content. The absence of the theme of children's rights in the programmes may thus reflect the wider context in which production takes place, where there is little faith left in the power of human rights' instruments and institutions to improve people's lives, including those of children (Allen, 2013; Arts, 2012; Arts et al., 2007).

6.3.4 Resistance and resistance literature

As shown in Table 10 for the ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow* and Table 28 for the PSC's *Sesame Street*, resistance is a theme with a very low (or nil) frequency-of-occurrence. In the case of the ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the percentage is smaller than one might expect from Hamas-backed media, even for children's programmes. The PSC's *Sesame Street* had no mention at all of resistance or resistance literature, presumably because it was not judged appropriate content for a children's programme. This may not be that surprising given the extent to which the PSC is carefully 'monitored' by its international donors for signs of excess radicalism (Abuzanouna, 2012:146).

Sesame Street producers have a different ideology with regard to the theme of resistance against Israeli occupation. They believe in a non-violent, non-military approach, based on the hope that moral pressure and negotiations will eventually prevail. Producers have attempted to counter the programmes of the ASC by not focusing on resistance values when violence is present (Interview: Sayeigh, 2013): 'After all, what we aim to do is to get the children away from what they see in daily life, away from violence and destruction, and bring them a new atmosphere of entertainment and fun' (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). If D'Acci's (2004) site-of-production approach is applied, this can be a good example of

how personal political views and affiliation influence the content and production of programmes.

The ASC sees the discussion about resistance as less of a problem for a children's programme than the PSC, but still it is only minimally present in the content of the episodes viewed during the selected study period. One ASC producer, when asked about this low score for the themes of resistance values, explained that the programme avoids being seen as instrumental in turning children into fighters: 'We can't give the responsibility of carrying a gun and resisting occupation to a child' (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013). However, in the past, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* was criticised by Israel and some of its Western allies precisely for encouraging children to turn to violence (Daily Mail, 23 July 2008). Those responsible for *Pioneers of Tomorrow* state clearly that they consider it a mistake to involve children in resistance activities themselves (Interview: Al Bardawil 2013).

The ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow* does acknowledge the emotional and psychological strain on children who daily face the Israeli siege and the periodic, lethal attacks, witnessing damage to property, economic attrition, detention, death of family members and injuries and deaths of friends at school. In such circumstances, any pretense of keeping children totally isolated or protected from the harsh political realities that affect Gazans in particular on a daily basis, is not credible, it seems. In screening specific episodes, one sees that resistance is mentioned occasionally. For example, the puppet Nassur made indirect reference to the importance of resistance to end Israeli occupation and to free the Al Aqsa mosque. In that episode, as mentioned earlier, the mosque itself was represented as a prisoner in the hands of Israel. 'Al Aqsa the prisoner that we must liberate,' Nassur told the children (Po'T15). One child, phoning in from Saudi Arabia, talked about Hamas and famous martyrs assassinated by Israel and about a song by a child: 'I am the story of a lost nation, I am the pain, I am the tears, I am the candle' (Po'T13). In the same episode, a child described 'the wound sustained by bastards.' Thus, the resistance discourse was also present in the contributions of the participating children who phoned in, and were allowed to speak about certain resistance-related values.

There were clear signs, amidst the responses to children who phoned in from abroad, especially those from Saudi Arabia and Algeria, that

indicated that defactionalised content was being sought by the producers of *Pioneers*. When children phoned in and attempted to contribute rather factionalised content, criticising President Abbas, for example, for having direct contacts with Israel, the response was to divert the discussion away from the issue, and back to Israel as a common enemy. Nassur once tried to avoid the link being made by a child to the PA, and brought the child back to the discussion around resistance in general. Focusing only on Israel and its 2008-2009 war on Gaza, Nassur talked about the experiences he had during the war and how difficult it was for him to breathe after airstrikes: 'It is true that they [the Israelis] care about keeping their environment clean, but they are extremely careful in destroying our environment' (PoT07). In the same episode, the discussion took another thread where Sara taught Nassur about the fatal damages caused by the use of uranium in the war. Nassur then stated: 'So Sara, this means I will be dying slowly slowly.' This was a powerful, if subtle, example of how producers' decisions to defactionalise the themes of media content and production values worked out to influence media practices by pushing the discussions towards blaming Israel and its attacks that destroy lives and trees, and the use of illegal weapons against the civilian population. Such defactionalisation, by focusing on what Israel is doing, is the result of a decision made by the producers. If the discussion had been about anything else, the child would probably have been allowed to continue, but since talking about the Palestinian Authority in a critical way would simply feed factionalism, this discussion was turned into something the ASC would be more comfortable with.

Talk of resistance in the ASC's children's programme was apparent when the discussion focused on the impact of war and siege. The study period includes the period immediately following Israel's attacks on Gaza during 'Operation Cast Lead,' which made it impossible for programmes to avoid the theme of resistance values. One child calling in from Algeria recited a poem which included a line about the 'shame of Arabs who keep quiet about the massacres in Gaza' (PoT10). This shifted a discussion about ideas of resistance to the topic of the PA. This example of factionalism sat uneasily with the talk of Palestinians and Al Aqsa mosque as prisoners of Israel and 'a legacy in our souls.'

In another episode, Sara reminded the children of the prospect of returning to Al Quds one day and liberating Palestinian prisoners. In

Pioneers of Tomorrow, episode 7, Sara wanted the children to challenge all the obstacles created by Israel after the war, when she said:

‘...let us not despair of life, but let us work together, start together and never say it is too late. Let us make every child plant a flower and build what the Zionist occupation has destroyed, so that we can breathe fresh air and enjoy the Palestine of hills and mountains’ (PoT07).

Another example was Nassur making a point by saying: ‘We will not rest until we can free Palestine and Jerusalem, the capital of Arab culture’ (PoT15). This represented the core of non-violent resistance, which goes hand in hand with the Arab States’ boycott of Israel and their announcement of Jerusalem as the capital for Arab culture. There was never a direct call for children to resist violently or take up guns. There were only indirect messages of appreciation for continuation of the resistance to Israel. In another context, the right of return was framed by Sara as ‘the right of a Palestinian to return home’ (PoT 21).

Apparently, this low-level frequency of mentioning resistance as a topic of discourse is the result of deliberate action. Previously, ‘Zionists attempted to demonise’ the children’s programming of the ASC, and some of that criticism may have been well-founded (Al Bardawil, 2013). However, after that critique, the ASC’s management sent a clear message to the programmers of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, to not involve children directly in politics and Hamas ideology. The channel came to accommodate itself to the expectation that it would focus on the child as in need of protection, as a subject with rights, and sometimes a victim, rather than as a potential aggressor or combatant in the resistance movement. ASC’s producers learned lessons from previous mistakes in which images of Palestinian refugee children, located in Beirut, throwing stones, were used to create an unfriendly response by the Israeli military to Palestinian children living inside Palestine. ‘We don’t want stereotypes of children with stones, children with RBG’s (rocket propelled grenades) and children with Kalashnikovs’ (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013).

By contrast, the lack of reference to resistance values, whether violent or non-violent, in *Sesame Street*, stems from the principle that children should not be involved in resistance politics at all, even if siege and violence do affect Palestinian children, directly and indirectly. This position reflects the view of Fatah as part of the larger institution that runs the Palestinian Authority, and of the political elites that tend to

dictate the agendas for the ‘circuits of production’ in which media producers have to operate (D’Acci, 2004).

Although resistance cannot be absent from the context of the programmes, because of the ongoing Israeli occupation, *Sesame Street* chooses to approach the topic of resistance indirectly, by using positive and problem-solving metaphors in its episodes. There was, for example, an argument between puppets Kareem and Abbas as to the ownership of a guitar. The debate raged until Uncle Salim stepped in to solve the quarrel without using violence, by way of a mutual decision to peacefully share the guitar: ‘Don’t fight, let us find another way to solve our problem... there is another way’ (SS12). It can also be suggested that this small, apparently insignificant story might have been some kind of reference to the PA’s method of negotiating with Israel to end the conflict, for example through land swaps and compromises with Israel (Ayooob, 2012).

It thus seems that a (more or less) removal of children from ‘politics’ and from ‘resistance’ has become part of the dominant script of both channels, as far as the children’s programmes are concerned. The overall consequence of a decision to moderate content away from overtly politicised and factional values has led to a form of defactionalisation. This implied a shift away from old images of Palestinian military wings giving children guns on TV shows as part of ASC programming.

6.3.5 Social values

In spite of some differences and contrasts between the two channels, such as with regard to resistance values, it is also important to note points of similarity between them. PSC and ASC children’s programmes have featured the theme of social values with the same frequency. Social values were an explicit theme in 52% of the programme episodes. Producers from both television channels commented on this balanced result with satisfaction. Yet, the ‘similar’ thematic focus on social values did not mean quite the same thing in each case. The process of defactionalisation had its prices, and one price was that programming had to avoid overtly political themes and focus on less controversial ‘social values.’ In a traditional society like Palestine, it is to be expected that media production will reflect traditional values by encouraging adherence of the audiences to what are viewed as positive customs and norms within the society.

The differences between the two programmes become more apparent when talking, for example, about friendship. In *Sesame Street*, a 'friend' is defined, by children, as someone who works hard in school, obtains good grades, comes from a respectable family and is cooperative and helpful toward others (SS13). In contrast, for *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the definition of 'friend' is a little different (PoT16). When Puppet Nassur referred to a friend of his who does not pray, Sara asked whether Nassur should even have this person as a friend. All the telephone calls received from children advised Nassur not to maintain this friendship. ASC may have made a pre-selection of the phone calls in this case, suggesting that media producers are responding with the use of sets of 'routines' and regulations of the institutions, which become an influence on thematic content (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996; Gans, 1979; Gitlin, 1980). My field observations within the ASC indicate that it would even be considered unacceptable if it emerged that one of the media crew members did not pray. Such personal piety would not be seen as relevant for those in the *Sesame Street* production team or in most of the PSC's programming (field notes: Almoghayer, 20 June 2013).

From a strict Hamas perspective, the producers of ASC already compromised by showing a child who was friends with someone who did not pray. Any child could have taken this as a social value, and left it at that. Yet *Pioneers of Tomorrow* reviewed this choice, and made a deliberate decision to focus on the importance of Islamic values in shaping social values and defining who should be seen as suitable friends. With this, ASC takes a potentially polarising position among Palestinians, given that, in reality, children have different religious and also secular backgrounds. However, even such a narrow definition of who is acceptable as a friend can be viewed from another angle, as a potential point of social cohesion and defactionalisation among the majority of Muslim Palestinians. As a whole they are affected by the emergence of a strong Islamist revival, whether they live in Gaza, the West Bank, or in the wider diaspora (Hovdenak, 2013).

In another episode of *Pioneers*, the puppet Nassur confessed to Sara that he had done 'wrong things,' such as cheating and paying a classmate to do his homework. He was then made to understand that cheating is unacceptable and against social norms, and that he should never do it again. Sara then went further and appealed specifically to parents to pay

less attention to work and a busy life and instead encourage their children and keep them on a path of honesty, including doing one's own homework. For example, in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, episode 13, Sara said to the children: 'Lying and cheating is *haram* and those who do it will be punished by Allah and go to hell' (PoT13).

Sesame Street is much more strongly focused on the theme of social values, especially in relation to helping others, being friendly, and this irrespective of other people's background or beliefs. In one episode, Puppets Haneen and Karim were looking for ways to help Salim in his workshop. This was viewed as a positive quality on the part of these children, and the children were encouraged to be similarly observant of whether people around them might be needing help. 'Today is Basil's independence day, he is washing his cup and dish on his own, and now we will see how he is going to put on his clothes on his own,' Haneen said about a small boy named Basil (SS03).

Similarly, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* teaches children to help elderly people to cross the road, to help carry their things, and encourages them to help their parents in their daily chores. In this sense, both programmes are quite similar in the thematic focus on educating children to be helpful to others. *Sesame Street* thus focuses on the fair division of labour among people, on reciprocity and on sharing, with children being encouraged to take part in daily community and household activities, like cleaning or helping neighbours. However, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* also made several indirect references to the negative social values that underpin Western social behaviour. It was explained that elderly members of the family are often sent to residential or nursing homes. Sara explained that, instead of this, the elderly should be cared for by family members at home, just as a 'mother carries a child in the womb, and the father supports the family' (PoT22).

The focus in *Sesame Street* is on fully involving children in talks about family structure and relations with parents, and on avoiding negative behaviour like fighting and squabbling over possessions, as in the example of puppets Haneen and Kareem, mentioned earlier, who fought over a guitar. In all cases in which they arise, disputes are solved through respectfully engaging in dialogue, in sharing and showing love and in understanding the other person. Children are encouraged to imagine that society is peaceful around them, even if they suspect it may not be so (Warshel, 2012). Such social value themes echo the general feelings of

Fatah toward negotiations with Israel and their welcoming of the prospects of conflict resolution and peace in the future.

6.3.6 Cultural values

When this research started, it was expected that children's and cultural programmes would both focus strongly on Palestinian cultural values (as it was expected in the case of resistance values.) However, once again content analysis showed that only in a couple of *Sesame Street* episodes (i.e., less than 10 percent) was there evidence of attention for the theme of cultural values. In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, cultural values simply did not appear as a theme at all, in any of the episodes watched. This is significantly lower than expected, and may be because social values have largely replaced cultural values as one of the main concerns of producers.

Sesame Street does talk about traditional arts and speaks to children about the importance of the *thobe*, the Palestinian national dress and traditional cultural attire. The PSC programme also recognizes other forms of craft production as part of Palestinian heritage, as shown in *Sesame Street* (SS15), where a child named Aya was given the chance to learn from her grandmother about the importance of embroidery. In some episodes of *Sesame Street*, there was a focus on Palestinian singers and songs (SS13). In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, these musical forms of artistic and cultural expression did not appear at all, given ASC's disapproval of such music, which has little religious content, as shown in several episodes in which children sang for Al Aqsa (PoT15) or when they cited Islamic Nasheed (PoT20) on the love for their nation.

Thus, whilst *Sesame Street* featured singers and superstars, for example during a song contest for puppets Kareem and Haneen, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* lacked this type of content. Even national poets, such as Mahmoud Darwish, a Palestinian whose poems were banned in Palestine after Israel alleged that they were used to incite rebellion, were not featured in ASC programmes. Instead, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* focused exclusively on scholars and figures with an Islamic orientation rather than on those who might represent Palestinian cultural values.

By applying D'Acci's (2004) 'cultural artifacts' element to the analysis of thematic content, one can reflect on how PSC and ASC producers presented values in the content of these two children's programmes. Artifacts were presented by the PSC as evidence of the messages this

media outlet was trying to convey to its audiences, using specific colours and clothing to identify its own programmes. The *thobe* and the Palestinian flags, and other elements of national dress and culture were used to claim that both the PSC and the ASC represent all Palestinians (SS03, PoT19). National artifacts are easily identifiable, especially when sound bites are combined with visual images and videos, and demonstrate Palestinian heritage, in clothing and food in particular. It is quite surprising that these cultural artifacts were completely missing from *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. One possible way to explain this is that, unlike ASC, the PSC has had - for decades - a virtual monopoly over representations of the Palestinian *Kuffiyeh*. Except during the 2015 Palestinian protests against the Israeli occupation, the ASC has never challenged this virtual monopoly by reflecting on such significant forms of Palestinian cultural artifacts as part of Palestinian heritage (Blank, 2011).

These 'missing' artifacts most likely are the result of the socialisation and attitudes of media workers in Gaza and their decisions to show or to ignore specific cultural artifacts, in relation to their exposure to them (Gitlin, 1980; Gans, 1979). At any rate, presenting cultural values as 'Islamic' rather than simply as Palestinian is a more important feature of ASC than of PSC. Thus, when ASC producers are asked what comes first - the flag of Hamas or the flag of Palestine - they are likely to say that the Hamas flag comes first. They tend to argue that since Hamas will liberate Palestine, it will become a sovereign state with a flag that actually means something. The flag of Palestine, they suggest, has become the symbol of an occupied, compromised land and of the burial and oppression of its subjugated people (Interview: Al Amriti, 2013).

6.3.7 Political values

Politics is an essential and normal part of the daily life and conversations of Palestinians, and this theme would be expected to play a visible – if not central – part in the content of children's programmes. However, content analysis of the selected *Sesame Street* and *Pioneers of Tomorrow* programmes showed no presence of the theme of political values in the various episodes. In these children's programmes, at no stage was there any discussion of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations or political rights of Palestinians as a whole. There was no purely political content, in the 'party political' sense, at all, in either programme. The PSC has avoided directly involving children in political values, choosing instead to focus

on nationalist values that help promote awareness of Palestinian heritage, traditions and cultural values.

The ASC's producers, on the other hand, consider the need to avoid party politics as more of a handicap, since it constrains their ability to channel messages that advocate for Hamas. To overcome such barriers to free expression, ASC producers tend to use metaphorical forms of language, in order to make their 'factional' points. This reduces the overall impression of factionalism and disguises some much more subtle, continuing forms of factionalism. Thus, stories, small incidents and metaphors become ways of featuring political values without being overtly political, and by alluding to the theme of political values indirectly. This happened when Nassur asked the children 'how do you feel about Al Aqsa being Judaised?' This question elicited several reactions, including one from a Saudi girl who started to blame Arab leaders for not standing by the Palestinians against the Israeli occupation (PoT15). In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, reference was made to the name of an Israeli prisoner of war, when a poem was composed and read on air by a Palestinian child invited on the show by Sara and puppet Nassur. The boy said of the Israeli soldier captured by Hamas and later exchanged for Palestinian political prisoners: 'We will make from Gilad Shalit a key to their prison' (PoT04). This mixture of political values and poetry was meant to convey a general feeling of hopefulness, and the idea that Palestinian prisoners could soon be free (Al Amriti, 2013). The implications of this are that satellite TV programme producers express support for resistance to Israel, even when Hamas abducts Israeli soldiers and exchanges them for Palestinian prisoners.

6.3.8 Educational values

Both the PSC's and ASC's producers made it clear in interviews that the main aim of their programming for children is educational. The theme of education was present in all episodes analysed for this study. In the PSC's *Sesame Street* there was a 100 percent frequency of occurrence of educational content (i.e., this theme emerged in all the episodes studied). Educational values also appeared as a theme in 87 percent of the episodes of the ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow* that were analysed. One explanation for the high frequency of educational values is that in 2010 the results of the 2009 *Tawjihi* (high secondary school examination) came

out. It became known that, in 2009, only just over half (55%) of the students in Gaza had passed their exams (Asskoul, 2009). At that time, therefore, there was a great deal of concern about the future education of young Gazans (Abu Kamar, 2009). This pass rate was considered worryingly low for the Palestinian community, and the majority of parents started to pick up on the need to focus on education as a vital issue (Asskoul, 2009).

The precise definition of 'educational values' was slightly different for each of the two programmes. For *Sesame Street*, for example, purely educational values were covered for children aged from 5 to 14 years, on a wide range of topics, including how to learn the alphabet, vocabulary, foreign-language skills, numbers, the importance of cooperation in problem solving, the use of the library, borrowing books, and reading, either to oneself or aloud to others. Other values of learning also included personal health care, i.e., teaching children the importance of good eating, adequate sleep, and regular personal hygiene habits, like brushing their teeth, and having a good breakfast before school (SS08; SS19). In *Sesame Street*, the children were sometimes taken outside, into the street environment, but in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* they always stayed in the studio. In addition to having them sing songs, including educational songs about road safety and traffic lights, children were told: 'Remember kids that we have to speak softly and should not raise our voices in the library' (SS18). The use of the quite tightly controlled studio environment implied that education could be an almost exclusive focus of both PSC and ASC programmes.

Other themes of educational values were covered in both programmes in more or less the same way: the values of adequate educational preparation, the importance of study, reading and exams, and the stuff students should concentrate on. Other themes, such as being a good citizen or neighbour, keeping the local area clean, and safe driving, were covered with similar frequency by both programmes, albeit in different ways. *Sesame Street* focused on traffic lights, while *Pioneers of Tomorrow* focused on manners while walking on the streets. *Sesame Street* stressed the importance of having a clean environment because that is socially right. *Pioneers of Tomorrow* supported the argument based on the religious belief that Allah ordered his followers to be clean.

The producers of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* pinpointed other educational values, such as, for example, the dangers of smoking to human health,

whether by direct or passive inhalation. These warnings were passed through cartoons and children's discussions in the studio. *Pioneers of Tomorrow* also used dramatic anti-smoking video clips such as an emotional studio scene of a young girl crying because she missed her mother who died from a smoking-related illness (PoT10). Sometimes the programme covered such themes in a way that could be considered quite advanced for younger children. One full episode, for example, focused on the contributions of bees and honey to environmental and human health (PoT17). Another episode of the ASC's programme followed the path of Islamic scientists by mentioning Al Raze, the Persian polymath and alchemist, as a well-known Islamic figure in the history of medicine (PoT07). In another episode, pioneering scientific work by Avicenna, Al Khwarizmi and Ibn Hayan was mentioned (PoT08).

Sesame Street did not suggest a following in the footsteps of any specific role models, whether scientists or others. Rather, it focused on science and overall education, with few or even no references to any particular ideology or to Islamic scientists and scholars. In contrast to education in *Sesame Street*, in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* education is presented as an instrument of liberation, a means to attain freedom from occupation. In a special episode, whilst urging children to stick to education, Sara stated that 'education is our balance in life... protects us from all dangers... even from the oppressing Zionist enemy, we will overcome them with the education they want us to abandon' (PoT05). For Sara, education is even an instrument for rescuing the Al Aqsa mosque. However, when *Sesame Street* mentioned the need to encourage the continuing education of children in Palestine, it did so without any explicit reference to Israel or the occupation as a motivating factor. Whilst *Pioneers of Tomorrow* encouraged children to study hard, spend time productively and not behave frivolously, it also strongly emphasised faith and regular prayer as a means to overcome the impact of the occupation. The terminology used avoided looking over-factionalised or turning viewers against Fatah, and, instead, repeatedly emphasised the need to end the Israeli military occupation.

In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the language used was mostly formal and carefully selected classical Arabic. In *Sesame Street*, the language used reflected that of the social upper class or the colloquial dialect in current, daily use. When *Pioneers of Tomorrow* focused on values that inform

children, the lessons were usually both practical and moral. So, when puppet Nassur was shown with bee sting injuries after he had tried to harm the bees, the lesson clearly was that he should not have done them harm. The script declared Nassur was wrong to try and harm the bees, since bees were vital to the wider environment; they made honey, a valuable, holistic medicine and a sweetener, something all humans could enjoy (PoT17).

6.3.9 Entertainment

During daily free time, children are normally expected to enjoy entertainment, fun and relaxation. One would thus expect this to be reflected in the content of children's programming. This was most frequently the case in *Sesame Street*, where entertainment was present in all programme episodes watched during the study. In contrast, in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, entertainment, as an explicit theme, featured in less than one fifth, or around 17.5 %, of all episodes. The relative absence of 'entertainment' in the ASC programme can be compared with the relative absence of cultural values as a theme in the ASC's programme that was noted earlier. Overall, PSC's *Sesame Street* focused much more on both cultural values and entertainment. This not so surprising when one considers that entertainment was often provided by various expressions of culture such as in songs, clothing, cookery, literature and film. All these cultural artifacts featured as educational media, far more in *Sesame Street* than in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*.

As has been discussed, whilst ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow* was more serious, and much less likely to include songs, dancing or other art forms, *Sesame Street* focused on creating a 'fun' atmosphere using entertainment through music, dance, songs, physical activity and informal verbal interaction for educational purposes. Overall, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* adopted a much more sober approach to education, separating it quite sharply from entertainment. In Episode SS02 of *Sesame Street*, for example, a typical, stimulating combination of music and cartoons was used, whereas in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* this kind of combination hardly appeared.

The more conservative Islamic approach of ASC means that music, song and dance – especially when there is mixing between males and females, boys and girls – can be seen as religiously forbidden (*haram*). As mentioned before in section 6.3 of this chapter, a strong feature of

Sesame Street, which also characterises most children's programmes on TV in the West, is its attention for animals and domestic pets, and it shows physical interaction, including play, with animals as a constant value. For the ASC, however, direct physical contact with animals, especially dogs, is not in line with Islamic teachings.

Interestingly, this interdiction can itself be viewed as a form of Islamic artifact, in the sense in which D'Acci uses the term (2004). In *Pioneers*, entertainment values were much lower than one might have expected for a children's programme. It was explained to the researcher that the world-renowned Imam Hassan Al Banna, who inspired media producers, has as one of his 10 recommendations to not laugh too much. For this leader, 'the heart that is connected with Allah is constant and is quiet' (Al-Banna, 1942). This principle of calm reflection can be seen in the content of ASC children's programming, where Sara talked about the importance of cleanness (PoT14), the importance of culture and faith in the upbringing (PoT01) and fasting in the holy month of Ramadan (PoT04). This results in an aversion to non-religious songs, to dance and to most music. It could be argued, through the lens of Shoemaker's and Reese's (1996), Gans's (1979) and Gitlin's (1980) analysis, that this represents an ideological positioning on the part of ASC producers, a positioning which helps to explain how tensions are reduced between the two political groupings that control the two parts of Palestine: Gaza and the West Bank.

The influence of 'external' political factors is evident in the ASC, as both content and production are shaped by demands for a minimum of musical tone and voice – with music being confined to the kind used strictly by (usually male) religious figures, and only for rites of worship, such as calls for prayer. The ASC's version of entertainment is restricted to the amusing, happy gestures and movements of puppet Nassur. The use of jokes, by contrast, is evident in all episodes of *Sesame Street*, where the focus is on a witty, light sense of humour, encouraging optimism about the future, with a light touch that is not evident in the same way in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* (Warshel, 2012). Focused on specific, serious values that can educate children in the 'right' social values, the producers of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* seem to turn their back on the lively blend of music, colour, humour, cartoons and background noises that characterise all episodes of *Sesame Street*. Designed to make the children laugh and to

encourage interactive communication among them, the aim of the PSC programme is to have children actively participate, whereas *Pioneers of Tomorrow* mainly seeks to secure their obedience and improve their listening skills, as children who need to be taught how to think, and how to behave.

6.4 Evidence of Defactionalisation of Content

Despite the rigid Islamic mindset in the *Pioneers of Tomorrow* show, compromises are still made throughout. For instance, a child reading poems by national poet Mahmoud Darwish, rather than an Islamic poem, is a compromise worth noting. This is particularly intriguing, as Mahmoud Darwish, despite being labelled as a 'national' poet, is, because of his involvement with the PLO and the PA, not considered an ally by Hamas. This is confirmed by a previous analysis (described in section 5.4.2. of the previous chapter) of *Burning Brands*, where the poet invited on the show expressed that he admired Darwish, but not his politics. This statement did not provoke comments from the producers of the show.

Other examples of compromises made include children singing songs that are not specifically about Islamic values, or allowing children to wear fashion such as jeans and girls to uncover their heads, as noted in a recent study (Blank, 2011). This is something producers of the show would not normally allow, but *Pioneers of Tomorrow's* producer Al Amriti (Interview: 2013) acknowledged that this, too, is a 'kind of compromise.' Such forms of compromise could be a reason that children living in less conservative Arab countries than Gaza have been attracted to *Pioneers of Tomorrow*.

Compromises are made in such a way that they serve to defactionalise the media broadcasts, by avoiding that the PSC and ASC attack one another or each other's agenda, and by laying the blame instead on one common enemy, Israel. This is seen in *Pioneers of Tomorrow's* content, for example, with children calling in from abroad with songs in French. The producers decided to show the original video-clip of children singing 'I am a prisoner and love freedom' (PoT21). This choice of French is believed to be related to the arrest of Gilad Shalit, an Israeli soldier of dual Israeli/French citizenship. Another song, 'It's a beautiful day, look at the sun,' was sung in English by a child called Walaa. This is also a

form of compromise, because the producers have the possibility to select from hundreds of callers who wish to contribute. The ASC's producers here want to change stereotypical thinking by offering materials that are not seen as overly strictly Islamic.

One other point of distinction between the two shows is that *Pioneers of Tomorrow* seems to choose children from refugee camps who are educated in UNRWA schools, like Sara Barhoum, who attended an UNRWA school in Rafah. This differs from *Sesame Street*, where the selected children - as confirmed in the programme's end credits - have attended mostly Christian and privately funded elite schools, such as Saint George School, Mary Joseph Nuns School, Friends School and the Catholic School. *Sesame Street* mostly covers educational light entertainment and fun. *Pioneers of Tomorrow* differs in that its message is often more serious and conservative. Furthermore, in *Sesame Street*, the same videos are broadcasted more than once during the education sections and the same children are often used when conducting 'vox pop' interviews with children. *Sesame Street* is credited in coordination with the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education. In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the producers seemed to make a conscious decision not to involve the Ministry of Education in production or in providing feedback on the show.

Another point of difference between the two shows is that in *Sesame Street* the show's participants consist of children and both male and female adults, whereas in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* only children participate. Even phone calls coming in to the programme are handled by children. It must be said, though, that the words spoken by child presenter Sarah Barhoum sound like the words from an adult. The kind of figure represented by Uncle Saleem in *Sesame Street*, who often appears as a wise familial assistant on issues too complicated for Kareem or Haneen, is completely lacking in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*.

The fun and entertainment factor is present in both *Sesame Street* and *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, though it occurs much more frequently in the former than in the latter. *Pioneers of Tomorrow* uses more religious symbolism and less focus on Palestinian culture, traditions and lifestyle. The principle of courage is portrayed in both programmes, albeit in different ways. *Pioneers of Tomorrow* encourages children to show courage by challenging occupation and oppression and by speaking out against injustice. *Sesame*

Street illustrates courage from a child's point of view: using social skills among peer-groups, such as not fearing to climb high hills together or not being afraid to climb onto playground slides and seesaws with their friends (SS04).

6.5 Conclusions

Unlike the mono-religious form of production which ASC producers have adopted, the PSC programmes' religious content is much more limited, and also explicitly not only Islamic, but rather quite ecumenical. In practice, the sets of decisions by either channel, about whether to include, and how to frame, religious values in programme content, came about through a process of negotiations within production teams, rather than through decisions of lone individuals. It must be kept in mind that, like ideology, religion is 'a paradigm [that] is not static but is continually being renegotiated' (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996:242). Both PSC and ASC children's programmes referred to religion in ways that could contribute towards the defactionalisation of content and production, with sectarian ideology playing little part. It is also worth noting that religious content in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* never, even symbolically, referred to Hamas, directly or indirectly.

Those who own the satellite TV channels and those who raise funds for channels have an indirect but also controlling influence on programme producers and the decisions they take. When interviewed, one PSC producer seemed to subtly hint that programme content could be influenced by US or Dutch sponsors, whilst suggesting the opposite: 'I don't want to say that this [i.e., compromises made] is due to restrictions by donors' (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). Although this is not specific only to children's programmes, it does seem that in terms of 'hegemony theory and the practice of articulation' (Havens et al, 2009:244), both ASC and PSC producers have shaped content so as to meet the demands of those in power, whether Hamas or the PA/Fatah. The implication here seemed to be that, whilst producers did not wish to state this too baldly, it remained quite apparent that funding restrictions and preferences of donors have had a major influence, directly or indirectly, on producers too, and on the decisions they made about programme content.

What happens outside the production room has a great deal of influence on production and thematic content. In the case of PSC and ASC, similar pressures have led to a gradual consensus around the need to depoliticise programme content related to resistance values, in order to maintain the viability of the *status quo* (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996; Gans, 1979; Gitlin, 1980). However, in contrast to the PSC, which does not pay attention to resistance, ASC producers adopt the position of Hamas with regard to resistance. This came across in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, for example, in unequivocal demands for restoration of all stolen Palestinian lands, reiterated by Sara from time to time. On 'Land Day,' she says: 'the land will remain for us, we will remain on our land and will remain steadfast, and in God's will we will liberate our land regardless of what the enemies have done to it' (PoT12).

The priority of the theme of resistance for the ASC explains why (the idea of) 'compromise' was regarded as more or less a 'dirty word' by ASC producers and Hamas officials. Whilst the ideology of Hamas may be represented in ASC children's programmes, even so, compromises are made on a personal and production level within ASC. These can be related to the longer-term influences of "media workers' socialisation and attitudes" (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996; Gitlin, 1980; Gans, 1979).

7

Analysing Content of ASC's and PSC's Cultural Programmes

'Regardless of the political affiliation of our guests, in...cultural programming, we leave it up to our producers to decide, so long as they do not give guests the chance to attack Islamic principles - programming can be defactionalised as long as it is within acceptable limits' (Interview: Abu Mohsen, ASC, 6 December 2013).

7.1 Introduction

As in Chapter 6, much of this chapter will be devoted to content analysis of the incidence of specific themes in programme episodes. This chapter will consider how such themes are represented in the cultural programmes of ASC's and PSC's satellite television. The focus is on the cultural programming of the two stations, in PSC's case the *Cultural Flashes* programme, and for ASC the *Burning Brands* programme.

7.2 Introducing themes

In considering how these themes are presented in the cultural programmes of ASC and PSC TV outlets, this section provides a more in-depth thematic content analysis on all themes selected for this study. The discussion in this part is meant to provide a better ground for addressing the question whether defactionalisation of media content did, in fact, occur. The content analysis also relied on interviews with programme producers, to explain its findings and to link it to the theoretical framework of this research.

Table 7.1Themes in *Burning Brands* in order of frequency (out of 21 episodes)

Category	No (%)	Yes (%)
Cultural values	38	62
Political values	62	38
Resistance and Resistance Literature	76	24
Nationalism and National Discourse	95	5
Social values	95	5
Religious values	100	-
Citizens' Rights and Obligations	100	-
Educational values	100	-
Entertainment	100	-

Table 7.2Themes in *Cultural Flashes* in order of frequency (out of 21 episodes)

Category	No (%)	Yes (%)
Cultural values	-	100
Political values	62	38
Educational values	62	38
Entertainment	67	33
Nationalism and National Discourse	81	19
Social values	85.5	14.5
Religious values	100.0	-
Citizens' Rights and Obligations	100.0	-
Resistance and Resistance Literature	100.0	-

7.2.1 Nationalism and national discourse

In cultural programming, as shown in Tables 7.1 and 7.2, there were references to the theme of nationalism and national discourse in just under one fifth (19.0%) of the episodes of *Cultural Flashes*. In contrast,

this theme was present in only 5 percent of the episodes of *Burning Brands*, over the same time-period.

The frequency of occurrence of the theme of nationalism and national discourse was much lower in the ASC's *Burning Brands* than in the PSC's *Cultural Flashbes*, perhaps because the latter offered a broader image of Palestinian culture, and had a stronger focus on Palestinian identity, presented, for example, in national Palestinian art and in what distinguishes Palestinian culture from other cultures in the Arab and wider world. In the PSC's programme, literature was not introduced as a mere personal reflection by an author, but more as a way to emphasise the wider place of Palestinian culture in the midst of the Arab world, and in its relations with neighbouring countries, especially Israel (and Egypt.) 'In our country we must remember that we don't want to take a nap or sleep,' *Burning Brands* presenter Amani Abu Hantash said when she introduced 'Palestinian authors who saved Palestinians' souls from the wreckage of occupation' (BB16). In the PSC programme, powerful emotional references were made to Palestinian scholars and their literature, which is scattered throughout the diaspora. One such author, mentioned in an episode of *Cultural Flashbes*, was the poet Mohammed Al Qaisi (CF16), who died, away from his homeland, without anyone being able to attend his funeral or even pay a last respect. Al Qaisi had been living in obscurity in some place in Jordan and was only (re)discovered after his death. The broadcast of *Cultural Flashbes* on him and his work started a number of academic studies that led to a better understanding of his contribution to national poetry (CF16).

In *Cultural Flashbes*, the names of most of the important Palestinian literary intellectuals were mentioned, along with their ancestral birthplace, a village, a city or a region in Palestine. This was not the case in *Burning Brands*, where the focus was less (if at all) on their indigenusness, but more on the content of their writings (CF06; CF11; CF18). Unlike what was found for the children's programmes, in the two reviewed cultural programmes nationalistic references were frequent. Whereas in children's programmes the names of specific places were largely absent, most analysed episodes of *Cultural Flashbes* did include explicit references to historic Palestine. *Cultural Flashbes* presenter Abu Hantash was also explicit about the need for more attention for Palestinian poets, writers and scholars, who she felt can preserve

Palestinian national culture and civilisation, rescuing it from the brink of extinction (CF02).

The PSC's cultural programme did not boast that Palestine has the best form of cultural production, but it took pride in offering a balanced perspective of 'the destruction' caused to the national identity by mistakes made decades ago, by accurately translating and interpreting original colonial documents specific to Palestine and Jewish immigration. By contrast, the ASC programme suggested that Islamic culture forms the strongest basis for resistance, for national projects and for a better future for Palestinians. These media debates around the meaning of the Palestinian national culture have an impact on Palestinians up to the present day. The ways in which the past is interpreted and understood in these programmes very much affects Palestinians in the present time.

In *Cultural Flashes*, producers focused on Palestinian national identity and traditions. Unlike *Burning Brands*, which focused more on Islamic artistic forms, *Cultural Flashes* represented what the producers seemed to want, which is: looking for 'Palestinians' or 'literature' (Interview: Al Asfar, 2013), coming from Arab authors, poets and writers, as in the example of the Saudi novelist (CF03). In *Burning Brands*, one example was Izzddin Al-Mansra, a Jordanian poet who was encouraged to recite some of the poems he wrote to the female Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. He recited:

'the girls, the girls, the girls... the guards of the farms... in Palestine the case is different where women are dragged in buses into the remote prisons, in their chains are the bottles of milk for their children and some of the messages they had to hide in their ribs. Blessed be the breast-feeders. The beautiful women plant in the ground the most precious hopes and the saltiness of meanings' (BB04).

Cultural Flashes included episodes that covered Palestinian traditional and social arts in different locations, and local festivals held in the West Bank and in Jerusalem. Likewise, the shows sent a clear message about the legacy that Palestinian intellectuals have left, by promoting Palestinian culture and identity as a 'method for liberation,' as Amani Abu Hantash put it in one episode (CF11). The programme also regularly included literary criticism, airing opinions of Palestinian intellectuals highly regarded in their specific fields, both alive and posthumously. Thus, for example, Mahmoud Darwish, often considered

the highest-ranking Palestinian poet, and Edward Said, ranked equally in the field of intellectual writing and critical thinking, were often quoted and otherwise referred to during discussions, by the producers of *Cultural Flashes*. For example, episode 1 used Darwish's poems about Ghassan Kanafani (CF01). The work of such Palestinian intellectuals was referred to as monumental, almost a cultural artifact in itself.

Unlike *Burning Brands*, *Cultural Flashes* has kept the identity of Arab Jerusalem alive, by regularly broadcasting content focusing on the activities of Palestinians living and working in Jerusalem. Examples include the screening of British and Palestinian movies shown at a festival in Jerusalem (CF19), a movie 'Occupation 101' made by American students (CF13), and a message by the presenter that 'a nation without Jerusalem is without a soul' (CF02). This focus underlined the resilience of Palestinians within Israel, who are involved in other forms of resistance against Israel, for instance by opposing land and resource grabbing and the building of more Jewish settlements and by protesting against the annexation of 'illegal' outposts.

The emphasis was generally on the strength and dignity of Palestinians and less on their humiliation and misery under occupation. The same *Cultural Flashes*' producers recognised the important role of Palestinian women, for example, in reinterpreting Independence Day and ending the Palestinian split (CF09) and in the Day of independence for women, in the Day of the Palestinian Refugee (CF12), the Day of Arabic Language (CF09) and in the arts and in cinema.

One example is the inclusion in the programme of a satire by an American-Palestinian artist, speaking in English, who mocks Israeli troops when they stop her as she comes through Tel Aviv's airport to visit her family. In the same episode, on stage, she recalls what happened when she was questioned about her husband by Israeli security. She said to them: '...he is Palestinian, he is a Muslim. He has never been married [before], no kids, no divorce, no disease. He is like a Palestinian angel' (CF16).

Although the values of nationalism and national unity appeared less frequently in discussions in *Burning Brands*, there were signs of compromises when a former Minister of Justice (Dr Atallah Abuelsbah) was invited to the programme and introduced as a poet and head of the Palestinian Writers Union. Within the first two minutes of the episode,

the impression was given of a direct call for national unity between Hamas and Fatah. Abuelsbah expressed this as follows:

‘due to the division and the dominance of bureaucrats on the cultural scene... we are forced to build the union which is meant to unite the Palestinian intellectuals, whether they are writers, poets, novelists or others engaged in intellectual life... [and] to be able to defend all the interests of Palestinian intellectuals’ (BB19).

This call was amplified by his suggestion that all poets from all different political parties should be brought together, under the chairmanship of Dr Samir Al Omary, a Palestinian-Swedish author (BB20). All of this had the likes of a form of compromise, in focusing less on Hamas and more on voices from Europe and the Palestinian diaspora.

In *Cultural Flashes*, young Palestinians’ sense of belonging was most often served by the presentation of poetry written by Palestinians in exile. *Burning Brands*, in contrast, did not broadcast the products and cultural artifacts of the diaspora in this way. Instead, in *Burning Brands*, the national songs of *Cultural Flashes* were replaced, more prominently, by Islamic anthems, that were played throughout the programme. The apparently low frequency of nationalism and national discourse in *Burning Brands* was due to the decision by the programme producer (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013) to limit the discussion about Palestinian villages, towns and cities, such as Jerusalem, Jaffa and Safad, now occupied by Israel. Any talk or idea of selling historic Palestinian land, or compromising on giving up rights to it, was rejected in advance. As a result, the content dwelled on promoting loyalty to the homeland. This was symbolised by keeping and carrying the original keys of Al-Awda. Palestinians’ right to return to their homes, resources, agriculture and their original freedoms, were thus asserted by almost ignoring the Israeli occupation of such towns. The dominant view is that of Palestinians not only as refugees from earthly possessions and land, but also as refugees suspended in time, and held as if held in limbo (Leach and Mansouri, 2004).

7.2.2 Religious values

Religious values did not feature explicitly in the content of either *Cultural Flashes* or *Burning Brands*. Again, as was the case with children's programmes, this absence may seem surprising, especially in the case of ASC cultural programming. In a conflict area like Palestine, religion can be seen as a convenient way for people to cope with daily life experiences. Without being overly factional, ASC producers could have focused on famous Islamic poets, philosophers and thinkers, including the ones that were mentioned in ASC children programming. Yet all these influential Islamic thinkers and artists were entirely absent from *Burning Brands*. By contrast, Fatah is largely secular in its cultural programming. In their move towards ending factional expressions in the media, ASC media producers may have seen religious messages as carrying an embedded form of factionalism, and may have decided that this was something to avoid, especially during the specific period focused on in this study, from March 2009 to January 2010, when the wounds caused by factional clashes still had not healed.

The absence of religious values in *Burning Brands* may indicate a spirit of compromise between ASC producers and Hamas. Maybe for this reason this absence was not seen as surprising by one of the interviewed ASC producers (interview: Bardawil, 2013). The PSC may have opted not to address religious values because of its own outlook, and that of its sponsor, favouring a more secular discourse. It may have wanted to use the voice of a secular state rather than projecting the image, common in the American pro-Israel press, of Palestinian media as a vehicle for mass religious indoctrination (Lewis, 2013).

Given that Hamas would like to establish its credentials as a state-building party, the ASC response to such secular ethic may be to use a more universally acceptable set of discourses, rather than focusing on a specific, and Islamic, theological model of cultural life. What is interesting for this study is that the absence of explicit religious values in programme content can be interpreted as a sign that both the Fatah-influenced PSC producers and the Hamas-influenced ASC producers have decided to keep away from the divisive influences, including divisive religious values that can split up the Palestinian population.

PSC's producers might not rely on religious discourse because their education and social attitudes steered them in a secular direction. This is

in line with the communicator-centred approach, which views media, and the content developed by it, as influenced by the ‘socialisation and attitudes’ of its producers (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996:6). The PSC’s staff members mostly work quite closely with international partners and allies. In PSC cultural programming, in the period under review, there were pervasive references to icons of global culture, ranging from German singers and an American playwright (CF22), to Saudi novelists (CF03) and Swedish and Danish novelists and artists (CF11). Islamic art and writing were absent from this global appetite, however, although one might expect religious literature to feature more visibly in a generally cultural programme. Perhaps by opting to focus on the diaspora, and on cultural events outside local (Palestinian) realities, PSC producers tried to avoid more explicit, and potentially divisive, references to religious values.

PSC producers also differentiated quite sharply between the goals of different programmes, so that, for instance, in a sports commentary, internal politics of Fatah and Hamas are not discussed, but Israel may be mentioned explicitly for banning soccer teams or arresting players. Maybe the same kind of ‘specialisation’ applies to PSC cultural programmes as well, where religion is ‘outside the frame’ of the programme’s scope, as it were. Perhaps the lack of religious content in both ASC and PSC cultural programmes may be explained by neither channel wishing to be seen as factional.

7.2.3 Citizens’ rights and obligations

As was also the case in children’s programmes, discussions about human rights or citizens’ rights were entirely missing in the analysed cultural programmes of both ASC and PSC. As was discussed before, a general disbelief in the ‘power of rights’ may be behind this particular absence in terms of thematic content.

The lack of rights values in the PSC’s *Cultural Flashes* was indirectly explained during an interview with the programme producers (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). They told the story of the Palestinian intellectual Khalil Al Sakakini who started a school in Jerusalem, in opposition to the foreign schools in the city (CF13). The school’s curriculum included ethics and moral principles, but not rights. The content of the programme made reference to the idea that rights are something of less

importance than personal dignity. Rights, it was suggested, can be requested or demanded, but without the inherent principle of dignity and self-respect, rights on their own are not enough; they are secondary. This argument may help to explain why most producers, including those who produced cultural programmes for ASC and PSC, in the period under review, did not consider including rights explicitly as a value in their programme content.

7.2.4 Resistance and resistance literature

Table 19 in Appendix 6 shows that a focus on resistance and resistance literature was present in around one quarter (24 percent) of all the reviewed *Burning Brands* episodes. Resistance was present in just two episodes (9.5 percent) of *Cultural Flashes* episodes (Table 37 in Appendix 6). The *Burning Brands* episodes involved referred to ancient Greek poetry and literature of resistance, and to how divine laws allow for resistance and rebellion against tyranny and bad systems of government. It seems quite surprising that *Burning Brands* used examples from ancient Greece, which, on the surface, has nothing in common with an Islamic society. However, according to Professor Nabil Abu Ali, guest on the show: '[several] forms of rejection and rebellion appeared first in the old Greek literature when Isknios rebelled against the God and decided to take fire and give it to people, so that fire becomes a source of knowledge' (BB08). This may have reflected a compromise made by the producers, which allowed them to reflect on the historical precedents for Palestinian resistance literature, which first appeared after the 1936 Buraq revolution, sparked by the killings of three Palestinians by British Mandate forces.

The literature of resistance was used in *Burning Brands* to give a voice to certain forms of resistance such as the use of bullets, rockets and guns. Most resistance literature referred to in *Burning Brands* focused on the legitimacy and power of armed resistance, and fully rejected the occupation. The wording was heavy, and referred to the scandalous practices of Israeli occupation and their impact on the dignity of Palestinians. In *Burning Brands*, the Syrian poet Nizar Qabbani, who has often been accused by Islamists of focusing far too much on the female body in his poetry, was complimented for his help in introducing Palestinian poets to the world (BB20). Other poets, such as Mahmoud Darwish and Tawfiq Zyad, were also featured in the ASC's programme,

as cultural icons. The selection these specific authors did not feed into the dominant political-religious ideology of Hamas, which (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013) mentions Darwish with respect but still associates him with Fatah for drafting the Palestinian Independence Declaration document (mentioned in the previous chapter.) This suggests that a number of compromises were made by the producers to arrive at a form of ‘defactionalised’ media content in the ASC’s cultural programming.

Burning Brands sharpened its focus on the culture of resistance by suggesting that many well-known Palestinian poets might not have achieved such global acclaim had it not been for the Palestinian resistance, which it claims to have consistently inspired those poets. In one episode, a professor was invited to comment on resistance literature. The discussion centred on whether or not to recognise other forms of resistance poetry, not written by acclaimed Palestinian poets, but by ordinary people who just happened to experience the same resistance against occupation (BB08). Similarly, revolutionary songs are often not considered as part of the resistance literature. The direction of resistance value programming in *Burning Brands* leaned toward reflecting on the suffering of the Palestinian people, their steadfastness, strength of character, and rejection of all forms of occupation. When the studied episodes were produced, during the period of 2009-2010, the Arab Spring had not yet started, but *Burning Brands* had already begun to present the image that Arab youth relied on resistance literature to inspire them to turn against their dictatorial regimes. This was done, for example, by referring to a famous saying by (later Islamic Jihad leader) Dr Fathi Al Shukaki, who stated that ‘the intellectual is the first to resist and the last to be defeated’ (BB06).

In one reference to resistance, the producers of *Cultural Flashes* (CF12) made a direct appeal to the listeners for a redefinition of the meaning of resistance. Maya Abuel Hayat stated that, if Palestinians kept recycling the same content about resistance as in the past, this would become problematic as resistance itself and the power of this value would lose their impact. The generation of today would be defeated unless this notion could be reinvented, she insisted. In another episode of *Cultural Flashes* (CF10), clear reference was made to Abdelatif Akel, the founder of resistance literature, who not only fought through his poetry, but also predicted, again through his poetry, the upcoming

revolutions and the Intifada. He became well known as the inspirer of the ‘anthology of Palestinian resistance.’

Tables 25 and 43 in Appendix 6 show the profile of guests invited to *Burning Brands* and *Cultural Flashes*, respectively. Since most guests can be assumed to have loyalties, it is relevant to see how both satellite TV outlets avoided inviting factional leaders as commentators or guests on the show. It is not that they could not invite them; they just chose not to do so. As a note on the production process, it is clear that both *Burning Brands* and *Cultural Flashes* used writers not affiliated to political parties or at least not taking leading positions in Fatah or Hamas (as shown in Appendix 6, Tables 25 and 43). Reference was made to all forms of oppression, segregation, injustice and discrimination of the Palestinians. In this specific context, *Cultural Flashes* rarely presented a resistance value which encouraged writers to expose oppression and injustice inflicted upon them. Instead, sarcasm within the conversation was used as a method of exposing the practices of Israeli occupation. No references were made to armed resistance.

Burning Brands focused on resistance literature. In one episode, poetry was described as ‘a sword,’ with its words as the ‘sharp edges’ that defend principles as a sword would do (BB06). Using content, the producers of *Burning Brands* congratulated, and gave full credit to, the Palestinian resistance for their work and their efforts in obtaining the release of female Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails. Within this same context, in ASC’s cultural programming, resistance was applauded and referred to through various forms of poetry, stories, and novels by Arab writers who focussed on Palestinian resistance against Israeli occupation. The use of literature in *Burning Brands*, in the period under review, largely concentrated on the power of the word as competing with bullets on the battlefield. For example, a reference was made to the words of the Lebanese poet Salim Aladdin: ‘I say it in my voice, out loud, I want to resist, I want to resist’ (BB16).

Burning Brands also invited Dr Nabil Khaled Abu Ali to comment on the literature of resistance. Instead of bringing in writers to talk about military resistance, the ASC’s producers seemed to have made a deliberate decision to invite a university professor, wearing a formal suit and tie, and presenting a balanced view on resistance literature. He objected to celebrating armed resistance in one episode (BB08). *Cultural Flashes* made similar ‘sacrifices,’ for example by inviting the West Bank-

based poet Al Mutawkel Taha, who in one episode (CF16) spoke of Palestinian poets in general but also highlighted the work of Mujahid Izz El Deen Al Qassam of the Muslim Brotherhood, of which Hamas is part. Neither meaning would have been possible, were it not for deliberate decisions to avoid factional content in the cultural programmes of the ASC and PSC.

7.2.5 Social values

Social values appeared explicitly in 14.5 percent of *Cultural Flashes* episodes and in just one episode (5 percent of all episodes) of *Burning Brands* (see above, Tables 7.1 and 7.2, and Appendix 6). Social values were represented in *Cultural Flashes* only through a focus on the value that the humanity of Palestinian intellectuals and writers survives, in spite of the pain and suffering imposed on them and their fellow Palestinians by Israeli occupation (CF20). Similarly, the host of *Cultural Flashes* referred to the use of fear, which is challenged by Palestinian writers who refuse to submit to fear, and speak of replacing fear with openness and love (CF11). In essence, there was a call for the re-establishment of united relationships, in order to create renewed and stronger bonds among Palestinians. Likewise, the producers of *Burning Brands* called for openness in the use of Palestinian poetry covering miscellaneous topics, including love ballads and elegies, as long as that use refrained from offending, insulting or discriminating against others. This was another effort to culturally defactionalise the programme content in order to attract new viewers and make the producers of *Burning Brands*, who are Islamic, appear, just like their rivals and competitors at the PSC, keen to introduce new values and act as agents of change.

When questioned about this, the producer of *Burning Brands* denied that this move was related to competition for audiences (Abu Jarad, 2013) or reputation. However, the fact that the ASC included in its cultural programming, for example, poetic ballads that expressed love for women, points to a compromise in that direction. A concrete example is the Lebanese poet who had to censor himself by withdrawing the word 'son of a bitch' when citing a poem in which he was blaming 'the sleeping Arab leaders' and his need to resist their oppression (BB10). That the social values content was lower for *Burning Brands* than for *Cultural Flashes* may, according to Abu Jarad (Interview, 2013) of *Burning*

Brands, have to do with a deliberate decision to protect the cultural rights of Palestinian poets and intellectuals. As he put it: ‘...that’s a personal choice which I made, as I like an intellectual politician who is able to handle issues, because I know that a politician who does not read history is blind... so I cannot deprive those with talents and different political affiliations of the chance to appear on our screen – after all, political affiliation is a personal decision and should not affect the decision as to who should be on air and who not’ (Abu Jarad, Interview, 2013).

Attention for social values in *Burning Brands* mainly arose from compromises that were made, perhaps in an effort to maintain viability and dominance in relation to the more ‘trendy’ programme equivalent at the PSC, *Cultural Flashes*. Some of these compromises can be seen in an episode that focused on ‘Literature of the Mahjar’, in which a Palestinian-Swedish author was invited to speak. Although the producers could have invited someone to talk about internal issues, they, instead, choose to focus on literature written by Palestinians abroad (BB20). Other compromises were evident in two episodes (BB20, BB16). First, in BB16, the question was raised whether men should write love poems, or love ballads, to their wives. The love for and appreciation of women was presented in this discussion as a normal, universal and positive social value. This may suggest that other (mainly Islamic) male poets should be less harsh in their treatment of the topic of women and love in poetry (BB20). In a second example, poetic literature was justified by focusing on the positive value of brotherhood, and the need for brotherly unity in life. This occurred during a period of programming that coincided with a series of Fatah-Hamas confrontations, and the presenter of the show in episode BB06 quoted a famous saying by Islamic Jihad leader and one of its founders, Dr Fathi Al-Shukaki: ‘The intellectual is the first to resist and the last to be defeated.’ In another episode, Dr Samir Al Omary said that: ‘Despite our differences, there should be no difference between us... and I stretch out my hand to do serious work that sheds light on the Ummah and all generations’ (BB20). As both factions (Hamas and Fatah) were searching for common ground and for positive social values that could unite them in the future, rather than naming and shaming one another, this search found expression in *Burning Brands*, through appeals in the form of literature and poetry.

This shows that, even in the midst of factional conflict, the production of *Burning Brands* episodes was intended to appeal to a wider

audience including Fatah supporters and those not loyal to Hamas. The producer was clear about this display of the urgency of reconciliation, of shared identity and of national unity between Palestinian factions, and a unite-or-lose-everything approach to Palestinian solidarity and the future of Palestinian politics, where ‘culture should be the topic that unites us as Palestinians and not what divides us’ (Al Bardawil, 2013).

In *Cultural Flashes*, the content espoused social values through authors and writers who, regardless of their personal success, have common roots that unite human beings. Courage with humility was presented as a basic value, in advising the younger generations about authors, poets and writers who were able to challenge their surroundings while retaining a strong self-awareness. The social values content in *Cultural Flashes*, though minor, thus conveyed a positivistic view of social values in terms of social fabric, familial relations, a sense of belonging, and a culture of sharing between people, especially those trapped in refugee camps. Similarly, social transformation in life was presented in programme content by describing how Palestinians, prior to the Nakba of 1947 and Israeli statehood in 1948, lived free as extended families on farms, or as free-roaming tribal nomads and shepherds. This contrasted with their lack of freedom today, forced into displaced refugee areas and enclaves as they were (CF10). Even so, Palestinians were viewed as still bonded by common social practices, regardless of differences in family origins and location. Courage as a value was visible in both television programmes, describing the lives of Palestinians, including Palestinian poets who asked to stay with their families and share their daily lives, norms and practices and to experience, rather than run away from, the daily suffering under Israeli occupation, blockades and military attacks. These writers, such as Jumana Hadada (CF18) and Mohammed Al Bidar (BB21), were praised for transforming these shared experiences into novels and poems. *Cultural Flashes* celebrated this success as further enriching a trend toward positive and more diverse cultural expression among Palestinians.

Despite the Islamic and factional Fatah thinking in this matter, the poet, writer and artist, as a human being, was privileged in both the ASC’s and PSC’s cultural programmes. It was in writers and artists, rather than in politically active individuals, that both programmes placed their hopes for the future of Palestinians. Along the same lines, equality

between intellectuals and poets and the rest of the community was communicated as a desirable social value in ASC's cultural programming, perhaps for the first time since 2009-10. There were obvious criticisms as well. In the content of *Burning Brands*, for example, there was criticism of those who chose to 'live in high towers,' and were far removed from the harsh daily realities of most Palestinians' lives. Such people, it was suggested, should not distance themselves from their common roots and should return to looking at the reality on the ground, and share in the daily life of ordinary Palestinians (BB14). Class thus returns as a secondary issue in some of the social values appearing in the ASC's cultural programming.

7.2.6 Cultural values

As shown in Tables 7.1 and 7.2 (and in Appendix 6), cultural values appeared in all episodes of *Cultural Flashes* and in close to two-thirds (62 per cent) of the episodes of *Burning Brands*. Whilst *Cultural Flashes* paid extensive attention to Palestinian cultural production, by focusing on ideas that make up the whole of Palestinian history, in *Burning Brands* the focus was perhaps more narrow, and less explicit mention was made of many of the cultural artifacts that were noted earlier in this chapter as closely associated with the PA and Fatah, such as the Palestinian *Kuffiyeh* and renowned Palestinian authors who are somewhat in favour of Fatah/PA or the PLO.

On PSC satellite TV, the producers of *Cultural Flashes* gave prominence to Majalet Shabab Filisteen (Palestine Youth Magazine). This reinforced a youth-centred cultural scene that had emerged across the Palestinian diaspora and in Palestine, and included a poet like Najwan Darwish (CF20) and novelist Ahmed Haram, who discussed the literature written by young Palestinians (CF17). These youthful Palestinian cultural expressions were better reflected in the PSC's cultural programme *Cultural Flashes* than in the ASC's *Burning Brands*, which, by and large, still seemed to favour age and experience over youth. The PSC's cultural programming showed the cultural diversity of Palestinian writers living in the West, for example, and how they came to share their experiences with making art and literature with Palestinian youth in Ramallah, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. One example was Ali Mousa, who commented on a youth gathering, saying that the event offered 'a model for bypassing the division imposed by the Israeli occupation, even if that

is through art, literature and poems' (CF06). In one episode of *Cultural Flashes*, Palestinian writer Hisham Nafa'a discussed the structure and techniques of short stories (CF21). In *Cultural Flashes* the focus was on prominent Palestinian intellectuals, like Ali Al Khalili, who was selected as cultural figure of the year in 2010 (CF20). He talked about how much language had been ruined by the younger generations. At the same time he admired the new generation of young writers, who for him produced:

'...the deep, intelligent writings which pay attention to the smallest details of our daily lives from the T-shirt of a child, or a flower, using terms that can scratch the skin of a culture... this is not depressed writing, but it needs those who support it'.

Al Khalili also recommended more open criticism, because it will only make youth and their writing stronger. During this period, *Cultural Flashes* also focused on Hisham Shrabi, one of Palestine's and the Arab world's most famous intellectuals, who fought for the national cause by teaching Arab civilisation in the US and by establishing the Institute of Palestine Studies (CF17). He was recognized as 'one of the most prominent Arab intellectuals' by Birzeit Professor of Philosophy Abdelkarim Al Barghouti. The programme also focused on Palestinian poets like Amer Badran (CF16), by presenting clips about their work. Drama directors and a female Palestinian pianist were interviewed in the show as well.

In the programme *Cultural Flashes*, the producers introduced a list of all weekly cultural events and activities in Palestine (CF20), so as to display the richness of Palestinian culture, even under occupation. Visual arts and drama were also used to further the topic of Palestine's struggle against occupation and for the cause of freedom. Literature was referred to, so as to highlight Palestine's distinct cultural history and identity. Stand-up comedy made its mark here as well, as demonstrated by the Palestinian-American female artist Maisoon Zayed, who was presented in *Cultural Flashes* as an exponent of a new form of cultural value (CF16). According to Wadi Henni, commenting on the Irish film 'Hunger,' which covered hunger strikes in British jails in 1981, in which 9 prisoners died (CF09):

'this year's film production is done by a new generation with totally new stories and that is obvious... we are trying to bring films to Palestinians from outside of Hollywood and the commercial films circles. There are

films that we can apply on our Palestinian cause and some are also connected to our human story.’

Among those weekly programmes that *Cultural Flashes* introduced is a review of the work of another young Lebanese filmmaker, Jan Shamoun, including his film ‘Women Behind Bars,’ produced in 2008, and documenting the experience of Palestinian women arrested and thrown in Israeli jails. The programme confronts Israeli oppression, when a female prisoner in the documentary reports being threatened with sexual violence by Israeli soldiers, and states:

‘He grabbed me by the hair and pulled me down the steps. They walked me out, put me in a jeep. One grabbed me by the leg and one by the hands, and made me lie down in the back and started beating me with guns on my body. They made dirty gestures’ (CF09).

Shashat, an organization for female filmmakers, was also included in one of the programme’s episodes (CF19). Artists have been applauded for their impact on the screens of international film festivals. The work of the late Palestinian writer Khalil Al Sakakini was introduced in an episode (CF13), and the presenter of *Cultural Flashes* invited a guest who referred to the negative impact of foreign language schools in Jerusalem. The impact of the latter on Palestinian youth was seen as particularly serious, and Al Sakakini called for Palestinian schools to act more, stand out more and better market Palestinian values and traditions.

At times, *Burning Brands* made unusual compromises in both production decisions and content. For example, in production, it was decided to feature the Lebanese Shiite poet Salim Aladdin (BB16), who is also an actor and journalist, but someone who does not appear to be of the same respected status as most other guests invited to *Burning Brands*. This was perhaps a compromise-type decision, making concessions to popular taste in order to attain overall dominance in media spaces. The work of D’Acci suggests that, by incorporating cultural artifacts, which in this case includes literary works, the producers may have been making decisions that reflected their priorities with attracting a audience rather than with being a ‘typical’ *Burning Brands* Islam-oriented programme. Surprising departures from orthodoxy can occur in this way. For example, in the same episode (BB16), the poet Salim Aladdin recited these words:

‘Do not release the word from my hands, and run away from me, and after I walk away a teardrop on your cheek is the colour of wine, either clean this tear with no appreciation: a drop of moisture that is gone from the flower, or get drunk in me and add more...’

If such content appeals to audiences, it enables *Burning Brands* to maintain viability as a channel, something seen by the producers as a point of strength. Interviews also revealed that, indeed, the ASC’s producers have made deliberate choices to bring contradictions into the content, by inviting people who are not necessarily in agreement with the Islamic view of most of the ASC’s shows. After all, as Al-Bardawil put it (Interview, 2013): ‘It is not to our advantage to minimise our TV programming to a single group or faction.’

At the production level, producers’ choices can bring not only a poet who mentions wine and getting drunk, but also a Christian who could say anything he wanted about resistance and nationalism. According to Abu Jarad, the presenter of *Burning Brands*:

‘When someone affiliated to the Islamic movement of Hamas talks about resistance in his poem, that is expected, but a Christian Palestinian talking about resistance, that is unexpected and worth noting. I have the aim of achieving consensus by showing everyone that Palestine is a land for all and this is our land’ (Interview: Abu Jarad, 2013).

Burning Brands started to introduce cultural content into the programme that referred to wider Palestinian traditions, motifs like olive trees, agriculture, and the use of home crafts, all in a traditional, comfortable stage setting, together with coffee and a fire. In addition, the typical image of a Palestinian farmer taking a midday rest from his work, in the shade of an olive tree, was used. In one episode, this type of content was presented by poet Khader Abu Jahjoh, to reinforce the traditional images of the work that most Palestinians did, as caretakers of the land and livestock, prior to 1948 (BB14). As noted earlier, in the discussion of cultural values and artifacts in children’s programmes, Hamas generally did not identify as strongly as Fatah with these folkloric cultural symbols.

An episode of *Cultural Flashes* involved discussion about new cultural ideals and values that were bursting on to the media screen via the exponential growth of the Internet (CF16). Twitter, other social media,

student dialogue and so forth, all link Palestine with the wider outside world. *Cultural Flashes* went further and travelled beyond the Palestinian and Arab borders to promote global Palestinian authors and intellectuals, including Edward Said, who were able to carry the message of Palestine to the global community. Covering these figures was meant to widen knowledge among Palestinians, about their history, their struggles and historical intellectual traditions, beyond the region. The head of TV programming of the ASC, Al Asfar (Interview: 2013), said ‘we are talking about artists, poets, writers, musicians, cartoonists and filmmakers who are usually not controversial to anyone. Culture in Palestine forms a shared ground.’

7.2.7 Political values

As Tables 7.1 and 7.2 show, political values occur with the same frequency in both the PSC *Cultural Flashes* and in the ASC’s *Burning Brands*, of 38 percent each. This is not particularly surprising, as the political situation determined how much both parties wanted to inject their political agendas into their TV programming in the period under review. Political values can here be viewed by using the Shoemaker and Reese (1996) ‘hierarchy of influences model’ that was inspired by Gans (1979) and Gitlin (1980). This model suggests that media organisations influence production and content in a vital way. It also suggests that political values that appear in a show do not occur by themselves, but are ‘coloured’ by the media organisations, to make them appear in a particular way. The particular approach used in this model came in response to critiques of the ‘mirror approach,’ according to which media reflect public social reality in a ‘neutral’ manner and without distortion (Altheide, 1976; Watson and Hill, 2000).

So, for instance, *Cultural Flashes* gave prominence to Palestinian youth (CF14), not only to show how much social media had impacted upon their lives, but also to show how much impact they had upon social media. The programme also focused on the experience of poets who had been forced to migrate to Jordan and other countries due to Israeli invasion and occupation. Reference was made to a play about Izz al Din Al Qassam, a Palestinian mujahid/fighter. *Cultural Flashes* focused on presenting the lives of Palestinians who were ‘extracted’ from Palestine, and were forced into the outside world, to face separation, alienation and continued injustice during exile (CF12).

Another political reference was made by *Cultural Flashes* when it reported on how Jewish gangs broke into the home of the Palestinian intellectual Khalil Al Sakakini and destroyed his personal belongings, including his writings and books (CF13). The choice of Al Sakakini as a national artifact, in the sense used by D'Acci, (2004) was made because he was someone with whom also the wider pan-Arab public could identify. This particular representation was meant to promote political values focusing on the injustice toward Palestinian intellectuals, who at the time were already suffering under Israeli oppression and intimidation, as still is the case to date, as seen from the perspective of the head of the PSC's programming in Gaza, Al Shafi (Interview: 2013).

The producers of *Cultural Flashes* made a deliberate choice to include Palestinian women in the (sometimes humouristic) challenge of traditions and forms of thinking (CF16). *Burning Brands*, on a few occasions, talked about a number of female Palestinian prisoners who were held indefinitely by Israel. Their courage was praised upon their eventual release. In an episode (BB20), recorded while talks of releasing 19 female prisoners were going on, it was explained that they would be released from an Israeli jail in exchange for just one Israeli soldier, captured and held by the Palestinian resistance in Gaza. However, in relation to making women visible, there was a clear difference between *Burning Brands* and *Cultural Flashes*. The ASC brought no women at all into the programme, during the entire period of the study. This was a deliberate production decision, clearly based on a judgement about the acceptable parameters of 'openness' and less factional content. If Abu Jarad, the ASC's producer of *Burning Brands*, was to challenge the internal rules and routines or even break them, by appearing together with a female writer in the programme, there would be consequences he presumably was not willing to risk. Undoubtedly, this discouraged him from inviting women to be present in the programme:

'We grew up in an Islamic society, conservative and religious – from this we have inherited an awareness, habits, traditions and social norms that we should stick to in our work, so it is natural that you stick to this. It would be strange to drift away from this direction... I can't bring an unveiled female poet into the programme that is against my own philosophy, my own upbringing and the policy and intellectual philosophy of the channel' (Interview: Abu Jarad, 2013).

In the end, it is not only the upbringing of staff members that shapes the content, but also sets of rules and regulations. Sometimes, I got the feeling that these regulations were a bit exaggerated, in terms of their strictness, by staff members. There seemed to be a competition going on between staff members as to who followed such regulations most closely. Abu Jarad (2013) acknowledged this as follows: 'Even if I am an independent figure and work for any channel, then I will be guided by the regulations of the channel. After all, we work in accordance with the policy of the TV channel.'

As was the case in *Burning Brands*, the producers of *Cultural Flashes* also, in the programme content, made reference to historical Palestine as extending from the Mediterranean Sea to the River Jordan (CF08). The producers of *Burning Brands* seemed to appreciate presenting the theme of victory, for instance, when prisoners are exchanged in deals (BB20). This spirit of victory in the content was not equally apparent in *Cultural Flashes*. Rather, there was more of a tone of Palestinian defeat in the face of Israeli authority. Notwithstanding that defeat, however, the programme expressed the view that a new generation of Palestinian youth might look for new methods to continue the cause, turning present failure into future successes (CF20).

Another political aspect of the content of *Cultural Flashes* was found in an episode that focused on the issue of the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, and that drew protests from Israel and the US. The episode built on the content of an article written by Motowakel Taha that stated that the Wailing Wall is Muslim property and should be returned as part of the the Al Aqsa mosque property. Thus, according to Taha, the Wailing Wall should not be part of Jewish places of worship but must be seen as a 'part that cannot be separated from Al Aqsa mosque' (CF21). Applying D'Acci's (2004) framework, 'the Al Aqsa mosque' then acted as an artifact represented here to underline the political value of reminding the Palestinian public that a holy Islamic site is under illegitimate Israeli control, and is inaccessible to most Muslims living in Palestine. Just by mentioning the Al Aqsa mosque, one triggers an emotional response. In its content, *Cultural Flashes* called for all issues related to the cause of Palestine to be redefined and rethought. It has even referred to the Israeli occupation as 'fascist,' after an example in an American film known as 'Occupation 101' that was screened in episode CF14.

Political satire has also been present in discussions around the Israeli-Palestinian agreements. In this context, the Oslo Accords are presented as, ironically, a blow to the overall cultural, political and economic life of Palestinians. Through satire, this challenges the PA's official line (Sienkiewicz, 2012). A form of defactionalisation can be seen in the deliberate editorial decisions to retain overall influence on content of the PA, whilst also allowing for some criticism of the Oslo Accords, an agreement signed by the PA with Israel. This suggests a relatively democratic media environment that allows occasional criticism now and then. Thus compromise takes place, even though satire that openly mocks the Oslo Accords would not be likely, not even now.

On one rare occasion, *Cultural Flashes* covered a political topic in which the Hamas *de facto* government in Gaza decided to confiscate two novels for containing inappropriate concepts and meanings, which were seen as immoral (CF16). In the introduction to another episode of *Cultural Flashes*, the host made a negative reference toward the Palestinian intellectual Khaled Darwish and his having tea with Al Aqsa Brigades militants of Fatah. Other left-wing factions were referred to in a more positive way, however, suggesting a hint of factionalism (CF12).

A sense of restlessness and frustration, related to the condition of people being perpetual refugees, was also present in the content of *Cultural Flashes*. Even after authors had returned from exile, they expressed how they still felt like strangers in their own home. The message here was that it is better not to leave Palestine, but to remain steadfast, and focus on the positive, remaining optimistic even though living in refugee camps in your own land and not having the rights that are assigned to many refugees elsewhere. Likewise, *Burning Brands* focused on the alienation brought about by forced exile. In one episode, a Palestinian poet living in Sweden was introduced. He wrote about the tough conditions of political prisoners and how emotionally difficult he found it to watch, from afar, what was taking place in Palestine. He especially mentioned the Gaza war:

'We lived the war as if we were there, our hearts and spirits were there, and our eyes were glued to the TV screens. For three days we did not sleep, even my small children... This is the spiritual connection for someone who loves his land' (BB20).

The Israeli war on Gaza took up much airtime in both programmes, which is not surprising, given the fact that production took place in a local area under Israeli attack. *Burning Brands* stuck to the value of the intellectual being the first to fight and the last to be defeated.

Political values were presented, that related to a sense of nationalism, and that advised Palestinians not to seek asylum or live as strangers in a foreign country, but to remain at home, however hard the conditions. Political values that encouraged people to stay and defend their land were somewhat contradicted by Islamic traditions, however. In Islamic tradition, traveling is considered a positive thing that enriches one's experience and knowledge. In the content of *Burning Brands*, Palestinians were depicted as a group of people sitting in a hot water boiler under high pressure, with literature representing the steam escaping from the boiler through the pressure-release valves, as explained from the perspective of Professor Khader Abu Jahjough (BB14).

The Fatah movement organised cultural evenings to be shown in *Cultural Flashes*, hosting, among others, Palestinian poet Sameh Al Qassim (CF06) who gave hope to Palestinians living in Jericho, and the 'Palestinian Writers Union,' which itself was put together by Fatah affiliates in Gaza (CF04). With regard to the featuring of this Palestinian Writers Union, a compromise was made over the content, in that religious references would be in the form of citations of Quranic verses, to demonstrate the power of the Arabic language in the Palestinian national discourse (CF09). This (intended) use of the Quran might have been an attempt to attract new viewers, mostly supportive of Hamas and other Islamic groups, but in this episode no religious values were expressed (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). The quotation from the Quran appeared to be a gesture, as most events usually started with the citation of verses from the Quran, and did not necessarily imply any intention of carrying a specific religious message.

Also in *Burning Brands*, content and production of episodes were the result of a number of compromises. One example was a discussion about the establishment of a new union for Palestinian writers, in which Hamas-affiliated writers would hold the chair. Dr Atallah Abuelsebah had spoken out against Fatah in earlier times, not directly, by calling them by name, but indirectly, referring to them as the 'old bureaucrats' or the old leadership of the Union of Palestinian Writers who did not

provide ‘unification’ for Palestinian intellectuals (BB19). The old writers’ union, which was Fatah-affiliated, was accused of squabbling frequently and having a fairly narrow vision, which prevented it from dealing with the many issues brought forward by intellectuals, such as writers, poets, novelists and artists (Interview: Abu Jarad, 2013). The new Union of Writers claimed that it called for national unity, Fatah and Hamas included.

The period of the Israeli war on Gaza in 2008-2009 shaped much of the production and content of *Burning Brands*, with programme content focusing on the pain and agony of the Gazan civilians during Israel’s assault at the time. There was coverage of missiles and rockets falling on civilians, men, women and children, who had no adequate shelter or means of defending themselves. In episode BB05, Dr Abu Moussa Abu Dakka expressed this as follows: ‘Tell the sunlight in Gaza to drink the salt of that blood... tell the waves of the sea in Gaza to drink the salt of that blood... Gaza might rise and let the land resist, it is a position of integrity that can’t be negotiated’. While the content called for national unity, it remained critical of any open dialogue with Israel, and of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations in general. Whereas *Cultural Flashes* rarely mentioned Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, also not in a negative way, *Burning Brands* often looked at them in a fault-finding way, by claiming that they were used by Israel to distract attention from issues vital to the Palestinian cause, such as refugees, Jerusalem and the right to return (BB01).

The separation wall was mentioned in both programmes (CF01) (BB18), as an injustice inflicted on civilians. The ‘fighting of brothers’ (Hamas vs. Fatah) was referred to on one occasion, and this was followed by a call to bridge the gap between different Palestinian groups and to focus on Israel as the common enemy (BB19). Even though both programmes did not host government officials (as shown in Appendix 6, in Tables 25 and 43), Prime Minister Salam Fayyad was mentioned in *Cultural Flashes* (CF17) and *de facto* Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh in *Burning Brands* (BB06).

7.2.8 Educational values

Educational values had a zero score, in terms of their appearance in both cultural programmes. This is not surprising, given the aim of both

programmes to appeal to wider, adult audiences with a strong interest in cultural affairs. Generally, educational content was absent because adult audiences are not addressed in a didactical-educational manner in cultural programmes with a sophisticated content. Adults are treated as well-informed individuals, already familiar with all aspects of Palestine's situation.

7.2.9 Entertainment

Finally, Tables 7.1 and 7.2 show that entertainment values appeared in a third of all episodes of the PSC's *Cultural Flashbes*, while they did not appear at all in the ASC's *Burning Brands*. *Cultural Flashbes* focused on Palestinian arts and traditions including Dabka (the national dance,) music, poetry and comedy. The introduction of paintings and – sometimes humorous - art was meant to challenge rigid settings and to broaden the content. Both *Cultural Flashbes* and *Burning Brands* made reference to the poet Dr Samer Al Omary. *Cultural Flashbes* highlighted his most cheerful poems, on dancing for women, storms, an Andalusian boy, birth and a crazy girl (CF14), whereas *Burning Brands* focused on a selection of his more serious literature about resistance (BB20). The nearest *Burning Brands* got to bringing a whif of entertainment was when the author's poems and ballads of love were discussed. In these poems, women, when they talk, are likened to a 'season of flowers' by the poet (BB20).

In one episode, *Cultural Flashbes* conveyed its intended message, about love and relationships, in a more indirect way, through a mix of transfer of serious values, playful use of acting and drama on stage, and use of body language and facial expressions (CF13). Actress Bayan Shbeeb read to the public in Ramallah's Anisa café: 'I met you on Facebook. You were enthusiastic in the streets of life, face to face. I met you, fantastic. Your eyes crossed my eyes like dozens of others, pathetic, naïve, socially retarded. Sorry, is that who you are?' The scenes will have appealed to the younger generation, whose members meet on-line and may struggle with tensions between mediated and direct communication.

New methods, styles and techniques of entertainment included adding more colour and feeling to what was previously rather dry content, that focused more on political struggle. One explanation as to why *Burning Brands* had a zero frequency of occurrence with regard to entertainment is that other values prevailed in the content. In the period

under review, the producers tended to focus largely on negative content, while – at the same time - the people had many negative experiences in their lives. Just like in children’s programming, the use of entertainment and fun was seen as frivolous, and consisting of a futile attempt to distract the audience from, or anaesthetise it against, the violence of occupation, and it was even seen as a form of denial of reality. From an Islamist perspective, in Palestine, what matters most is not entertainment but critical thought, channelled through cultural programming, that enables the population to deal with their daily reality. Another circumstance that might explain why entertainment was not present in *Burning Brands* was the constant presence of war, with Gaza being severely and directly affected by the Israeli occupation and blockade all year round, and by large-scale bombings and killings, although in 2009 these offensives were just forerunners of the onslaught that would follow in the years thereafter.

It was considered not the right time or the right place for entertainment: ‘Given the plight that Palestinian children are enduring, you don’t want to cancel the external feelings of a child or the intellectuality of adults by showing overt use of entertainment’ (Interview: Al-Bardawil, 2013). From a strict Islamic perspective, pure entertainment appears offensive to the feelings of people still suffering from the pain and losses of occupation and war. To laugh and have fun while other people are still suffering is considered rude, insensitive and not appropriate, in view of the overall, ongoing situation in Palestine. It also certainly does not ‘feed into the general guidelines of the ASC where Al Quds, Refugees and Prisoners are the main focus’ (Abu Mohsen, 2013). The ASC’s leadership did not seem to realise that laughter is a fundamental human emotion that helps in dealing with trauma and that should not automatically be taken to imply a lack of compassion – on the contrary, as demonstrated in research (Konijn, 2008), which established the importance of humour in Arab cinema.

7.3 Overall Thematic Content Analysis of Cultural Programmes

According to Gans’s (1979) and Gitlin’s (1980) approaches, the relative absence of armed resistance values in the ASC’s and PSC’s cultural programmes is a sign that ‘content is influenced by social institutions and

forces.’ In applying D’Acci’s (2004) ‘circuits of media’ framework, one sees that production decisions are also influenced by the ways in which media producers perceive reality. Thus, for the ASC, at the time, there was an occupation and the way to deal with it was by military action, while for the PSC ‘organisational routines’ seemed to play an important role in shaping content. The PSC, which is part of the PA, would be at risk if it would suddenly start promoting resistance values from Ramallah, an area that is still under direct control of Israel, despite the PA’s presence.

With the PA as negotiator and potential peace partner with Israel, it might be that the PSC could not afford to raise any debates that might be seen as inciting ‘violence,’ which might also include resistance, and/or other action that could be interpreted as a form of rebellion. External factors outside the media thus shaped media content. This is true even though Fatah still retained a link with the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, which continued to call for resistance. However, even this form of resistance was silenced by the PA’s officials, in order to, so the argument goes, avoid putting the rest of the party, the PA’s leaders and Palestinian civilians at risk of attack by Israel (Frisch, 2005). One major consideration, which will be returned to later in this chapter, was and is the concern of both channels – the PSC and the ASC – to retain strong ratings and to attract new audiences for their cultural and children’s programmes. They wished to attract wider audiences than those already affiliated with Fatah or Hamas (Interviews: Al Shafi, 2013; Al Bardawil, 2013).

The focus on poets and literary people, revealed in both *Cultural Flashes* and *Burning Brands*, was of considerable interest, as it marked a genuine departure from the past. Instead of in content that focused on the poet as representing a faction or affiliation, in the content analysed here the invited poet’s humanity came first. This contrasted with the situation in the past, in which for many years, whenever the PSC and the ASC presented poetry and other forms of literature, they would tend to divide those invited quite strictly into ‘ours’ and ‘theirs.’ Only ‘loyal’ supporters of their own faction would be invited to speak (Miftah, 2008). There has thus been a considerable shift in the direction of media defactionalisation, which supports the position taken in Chapters 2 and 3.

In general, during the study period, *Burning Brands* started to introduce different types of Palestinian intellectuals into the programme. These included artists, novelists and poets. Some fed into the rhetoric of Islamic thinking and others more into general cultural values. Yet, whilst one would (naturally) expect such Islamic scholars to explicitly convey Islamic values in the programme, this did not happen. Neither in *Burning Brands* nor in *Cultural Flashes* did religious values become explicit ones. What becomes visible here are forms of defactionalisation that evidently took place in production within the ASC, and in turn influenced the 'other side', encouraging them also to defactionalise content. Thus, *Burning Brands* introduced some young Palestinian writers such as Mohammed Labeed (BB21), and critics such as Dr Mussa Abu Daqqa (BB05) and other independent figures, who re-visited shared cultural values such as familial and personal generosity and courage.

Direct references to the context and realities surrounding the programming were equally present in the content of both *Burning Brands* and *Cultural Flashes*. All aspects of political values lean in one direction: the naming and shaming of Israel as the oppressor, the political rights of Palestinians and a constant focus on refugees, the prior wars on Gaza, the Israeli siege and the Al Aqsa Intifada.

One of the most striking findings of this study was the neglect of religious values and human rights' values in both the children's and cultural programmes of the ASC and PSC. Each satellite channel has cultural programmes with content decided on by groups of individuals organised in teams. However, the lack of explicit religious content is likely to be the outcome of decisions negotiated at the production level, rather than the result of an oversight or accident. When informed about the lack of explicit religious values in these two programmes, the heads of programming of both the ASC and the PSC saw this lack as a mistake, which should be rectified, and should not have been allowed to happen in the first place. Their feeling seemed to be inspired by the notion that, as Palestine is the 'capital' of three global religions, a programme about Palestinian culture should include religious values and content. Professionally speaking, they felt that a cultural programme was a suitable media space for religious values to be embedded in content, without perhaps needing to be made explicit (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013; Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). Accordingly, both the PSC's and ASC's

senior staff agreed and even insisted that the lack of religious content was not a deliberate decision. They considered this absence to be an error or oversight in the production process. Yet, for some scholars (Spangler, 2015; Allen, 2013), an unwillingness to engage with rights values simply reflects the Palestinians' generalised exhaustion with the discourses on and institutions of human rights, which seem to provide no practical solutions for the dire situation of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. One researcher, with some direct experience of living in Gaza and the West Bank and working with human rights NGOs in these areas, referred to Hamas's 'uniquely critical perspective on and approach to human rights practices that challenges presumptions about the universal status of human rights' (Allen, 2013: 31). A sense of alienation from human rights approaches is shared by the PSC's producers as well, it seems.

7.4 Overall Thematic Content Analysis: Defactionalising Media Content?

Despite the denial by producers that donors play a significant role, it was found that the two ASC programmes, which are much less reliant on donor funding from outside Palestine, at least from the West (one would presume,) did have relatively higher percentage scores for content values around resistance, political values, and to some extent, nationalism. Since the PSC was driven by tight regulations and closely guided by donor groups who financed the TV station, the lower percentage of these values in overall content is perhaps unsurprising. Yet, in terms of social values, the picture was quite in reverse, with the PSC having higher frequencies of resistance values than than the ASC in its cultural programming. Both the ASC and the PSC had very similar frequencies of resistance and nationalism values in their children's programming. Both TV stations delivered messages to children that contained noticeable social values and featured educational content. For cultural values, the frequencies for the ASC's programmes were lower than for the PSC's programmes, especially for children's programmes. This may reflect that the PSC's *Cultural Flashes* focused almost entirely on cultural values, and that both cultural shows did have higher frequencies of cultural values than one would expect. Representing the cultural values of Palestinians is something the PSC – more than the ASC – has prided itself on, historically. This emphasis on cultural artifacts (such as clothing, dance

and forms of expression, plants, flags, and so on) was in marked contrast with what one would expect in the case of the ASC, where a stronger focus on religion and on resistance would be expected than in the PSC. However, the only cultures that appeared to figure in the ASC's mind-set were those of resistance and of nationhood.

Political values did not appear in either of the children's programmes, a finding which, again, is not that surprising. A calm period in the relations between Hamas and Fatah contributed to this, no doubt, during the study period from March 2009 to January 2010. Nationalistic values related to Palestine, such as prisoners and the right to return, have been present in the ASC's children's TV content, but overall have been more significantly present in cultural programmes than in children's programmes. Whereas educational values were missing from both cultural programmes, both children's programmes clearly contained them. As far as entertainment is concerned, however, the PSC focused a lot of effort on making the contents and production more geared towards entertaining children and making them happy. The ASC, by contrast, included far fewer 'entertainment' elements in its children's programming. During the studied period, entertainment values were also almost invisible in the ASC's cultural programme *Burning Brands*.

By looking at the values and applying D'Acci's 'circuits of media', one sees that defactionalisation of media content and production is still effective, despite the continuation of low-level factional practices on the ground. Sometimes media censorship, or rather exclusion of key leaders as rivals, has resulted in less room for media squabbling and for injecting factionalised agendas in children's and cultural programmes. Economic constraints may have contributed to defactionalisation in the four programmes studied. Clearly, also deliberate decisions were made to defactionalise content by focusing on other generalised values, with the intent to avoid bringing the PSC and the ASC back to square one, to a point of confrontation. The focus on cultural and children's programming brought on a lively discussion about Palestinianism versus a new nationalism, an idea that will be examined in the light of the concepts of defactionalisation of media production and content in the next chapter of this thesis.

A number of Palestinian lobbying groups, other civil society groups, social groups and national reconciliation committees have been formed

by intellectuals and academics. The social-historical contexts of media production have influenced the content of children's and culture programmes of both channels during and prior to the period of their broadcast. This means that people tend to experience issues or note concerns, and then go out and discuss them in public. Some time later such issues and concerns tend to appear in the content of the PSC's and ASC's programmes.

In this chapter, values have been discussed in relation to the frequency of their appearance in children's and cultural programmes. Table 1 (Appendix 6) shows that, in general terms, all four programmes, taken together, have focused most on educational values: education as a value occurs in 49% of all programme episodes. The second most frequently occurring value was the cultural one, which featured in 41% of all episodes. Entertainment and social values featured in 39% and 32% of all episodes, respectively. Overall, whereas political values featured in only 18% of all episodes, programmes have tended to focus more on education and culture, suggesting a weak form of factionalism. Other values do arise, and nationalism and resistance are perhaps the most significant among them, given the nature of the occupation and how this affects media in Gaza and West Bank. However, when looked at all together, as in Table 1 (Appendix 6), most other secondary values are minor in their influence on the four programmes' content.

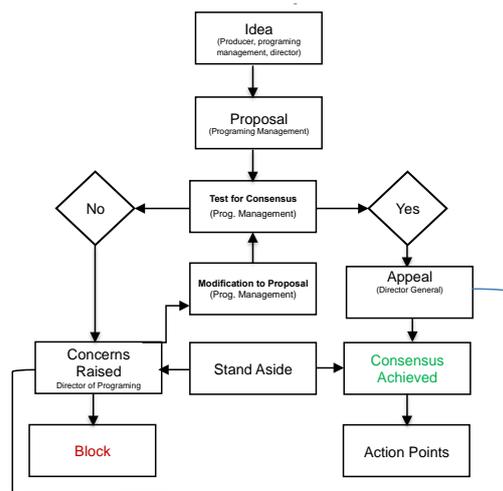
The PSC and ASC should of course not be seen as operating in a vacuum. They did not simply invent values or fabricate issues that they felt ought to be discussed. In fact, both channels had to react to what the public was feeling, discussing and doing, in order to stay in tune. Since this study focused on a period of post-active conflict, it is perhaps not that surprising that media content appears not to be overtly factional. A critical factor, almost certainly, during the study period, was the war on Gaza and the stepped-up Israeli military attacks; in this context, it was logical that both channels' attention refocussed on Israel as an occupying power.

7.5 Comparing Decision-making and Producers' Environments across the ASC's and PSC's Programming

From interviews and observations, around the TV shows and the decision-making process of both the PSC and ASC, it appears that this

decision-making process follows an almost-identical pattern, as shown in the diagrams below. Creative ideas for a programme have to go through a development process. In the PSC and ASC, this process often starts at the level of the producer or other people closely involved in the programming. Next, he/she presents the programme idea in the form of a written proposal, which is subjected to a test for consensus by the Programme Management Unit (PSC) or the Executive Council (ASC). At that level, the heads of departments meet to reach a final decision.

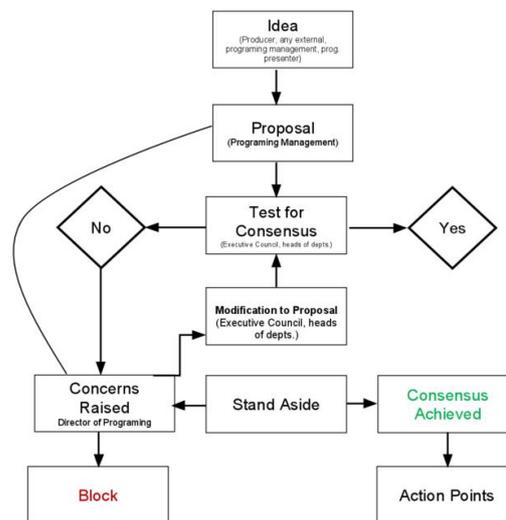
Figure 1: PSC decision-making process



The final decision, as to whether develop the programme idea further or shelve it, depends on how much it is in line with the general guidelines of the TV station. For example, in the case of the ASC, if the proposal is rejected, concerns are raised and the Executive Council immediately blocks it (without the possibility of appeal.) The only option for those who proposed it, is then to go back and either modify or

withdraw it (Abu Mohsen, 2013). With regard to the PSC, the situation is slightly different, with less rigidity in the system and more possibilities for manoeuvring. If the decision on a programme idea is negative, an appeal can be filed, directly by the programming staff involved, with the Director General (Interview: Shafi, 2013). ‘After all, we are all connected to our director, and I could do so by writing directly to him on Facebook’ (Shafi, 2013).

Figure 2: ASC decision-making process



As mentioned, in the case of the ASC, a negative decision about a programme cannot be appealed. This reflects the culture of Hamas, in which there is a tendency to work along fixed principles and fixed ideas. In contrast, at the PSC, Fatah’s culture has the upper hand. In this culture, people, not principles and ideas, prevail. People are often flexible and willing to engage in discussion as to why programme ideas are rejected. The result of this difference in approach to the programming process is that, at the PSC, staff members can freely select the topics of programme episodes, whereas at the ASC, the choice of topics must be in accordance with the general guidelines and policy of the TV channel (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). After programmes have been approved, the selection of episodes is usually left to the programme production

team, which consists of the producer, the presenter and – sometimes – the director of programming. The programme production team is responsible for the programme content, the way feedback is dealt with, and the improvement of quality.

7.6 Comparing Producers' Environments across the ASC's and PSC's Cultural Programming

There are almost always ideological and practical compromises and negotiations that take place behind the scenes and that also influence values of the final content. 'Final decisions are made at the top level, but anyone on my crew could also be friends with the Director General on Facebook and could use this as a way to communicate ideas that influence decisions being made' (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). These kinds of compromises arise out of what D'Acci (2004) termed the 'socio-historical context,' and are vital to understanding the significance of such apparently mundane stories from satellite TV programming, including those related to the values of nationalism, resistance and politics.

This reflects what D'Acci (2004) referred to in her 'circuits of media' approach, when discussing socio-historical context, showing that producers are influenced by this socio-historical context. Events as perceived by media producers (and political elites who own the ASC and PSC) are relevant to the narrative which appears in programme content.

Furthermore, as has been shown by the thematic content analysis, educational values are significant in the content of the children's programming of both the PSC and the ASC. The producers could have focused more on political education, as the ASC tended to do in the past. Instead, the producers at the ASC and PSC are taking a rather controlled approach to protecting child audiences from strictly party-related, factional politics. As shown in the previous analysis in this chapter, by engaging in educational values and in social values, each programme tried to emphasise what Palestinian children have in common, and thus to avoid transmitting factional views to the wider diaspora and beyond. The findings of this study, overall, are that educational values were the most common of all in the children's programmes of both satellite TV channels. This suggests that in the production of children's TV programmes, by both sides, decisions seem to have been taken which have had the effect of distinctly defactionalising media content and

avoiding overt references to political groupings contending for electoral power. The setting of educational goals, as they are inclusive, and to some extent, resistant to factionalisation, can help promote different dialogues.

The producers of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* claimed that the programme helps some children to deal with some of the real-life difficulties they face under the occupation. The programme engaged in questions of ageing, the burdens of family care and responsibility in a society under stress. *Pioneers of Tomorrow* shows that people disappear, that there are prisons and that there is an Israeli army. All are mentioned and featured explicitly and openly, acknowledging the reality children experience themselves, especially - but not only - in Gaza. In contrast, *Sesame Street* handled social values in a more decontextualised and more diplomatic manner, mainly by acting as if the daily socio-historical context of Palestinian children was more or less 'normal' and 'peaceful', and as if family picnics amidst quiet fields were a real possibility for most Palestinians (SS23).

This lack of overtly political, national content can perhaps best be explained as part of a wider move towards a deliberate ending of factional attitudes and values in the content of both satellite TV channels, in line with the approach of both political parties to end factional rhetoric and behaviour. This context too may have influenced "media workers' socialisation and attitudes," within both the ASC and the PSC, as was suggested by Gans (1979) and Gitlin (1980). Shoemaker and Reese (1996:6) suggested that:

'Psychological factors intrinsic to communications personnel – their professional, personal, and political attitudes, and the professional training communicators receive – lead them to produce social reality in which agreement among social groups is the norm and in which new ideas or behaviours are treated as undesirable oddities.'

Defactionalisation can thus influence the institutional norms that guide media production processes (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013; Al Bardawil, 2013).

In the case of the PSC and ASC, production decisions in the period under review were the outcome of the application of norms, and of institutional practices and expectations. Tensions and negotiations occurred over programme content, over what should be included and what not. D'Acci's (2004:433) framework, the 'circuit of production' of

media, conceptualised this circuit as ‘encompassing all phases of the production moment or the industry as the overall institutional context from which programming emerges and is regulated.’ When we compare all four programmes, we find some interesting results in this respect.

The first thing to note is that the sense of place, norms and practices seemed less rigid in *Cultural Flashbes* and in *Sesame Street* than in most episodes of *Burning Brands* and *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. Although the producers and presenters of the PSC’s programmes are aligned with Fatah, there seemed to be more willingness on their part than in the case of the producers of the ASC’s cultural and children’s programmes, to allow for content that was not necessarily strictly in line with factional priorities and agendas. This might have been so in order to achieve ‘compromises between those who sell information to the media and those who buy it; these forces counteract one another’ (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996:6). The cultural programme *Burning Brands* showed more flexibility in this respect than the ASC’s children’s programme.

In *Cultural Flashbes*, in the period under review, despite the fact that the main producer of the programme, Wael Al Manasra, worked in the PA’s Palestinian Ministry of Culture, the two presenters were not affiliated to Fatah. They were experts in poetry, art and literature in general. A common factor within the *Cultural Flashbes* production team specifically – which did not apply to the *Sesame Street* production team – was that its members had received their education in Palestine. Perhaps as a result, most social relations between the *Cultural Flashbes*’ production crew members were observed to be generally tension-free (Kester, 2008). This may have helped to create an efficient and trust-based working environment (Interview: Al Asfar, 2013). Although personal biases of some crew members occasionally led to internal struggles (Jamal, 2000), as one or two members would object to certain individuals being invited into one of the two programmes, overall there was relatively little overt conflict over programming decisions (Interview: Al Asfar, 2013). Often it was the talent of the guests that would force the decision of whether (or not) they would be invited to appear, regardless of their political affiliations as such.

In the ASC’s *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, producers sometimes made decisions which were viewed by some as violating the principles of the channel (Abuzanouna, 2015; Abuzanouna, 2012). However, *Pioneers of*

Tomorrow producer Al Amriti (Interview, 2013) was aware that these decisions were meant to send signals: ‘after all, clothes of participating children send a message.’ Perhaps the message that the show wanted to send, in allowing a girl invited in the show to wear non-traditional, ‘Western’-style clothing, was that the ASC was trying to open up more to all aspects of society. Defactionalisation involved acknowledgement of the lifestyles of young people, both young women and young men. As the producer of the ASC told me, in the past this channel would have insisted on young women always wearing the appropriate Islamic dress, and would have asked the child to get changed before being filmed, if need be. Thus, although one girl was ‘inappropriately’ dressed in close-fitting jeans, she still took part in the programme. Similarly, decisions were made by PSC staff members to focus on issues that one would expect only Hamas to focus on, such as the work of the world-renowned Islamic scholar Izz Al Din Qassam, who inspired the Muslim Brotherhood, of which Hamas is a part (Blank, 2011).

The ASC’s *Burning Brands* was subject to a more rigid production procedure than the PSC’s *Cultural Flashes*. Even though it may appear that ASC presenter Younies Abu Jarad had the final say in the process of production, he shared a crew that worked in most other ASC television programming as well. The relationship between them at the time was in accordance with the station’s ethic, in which work is guided by brotherhood principles (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). This provided an opportunity for production members – such as cameramen or other crew members – to also have a say. The relationships between the producer and the rest of the team were relatively ‘flat,’ ideally allowing for immediate feedback and discursive ideological negotiation, even when coming from ‘lower-ranking employees [who] may have special expertise or other means to thwart directives from the top, often making negotiations and compromise necessary’ (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996:145). At the editorial and managerial level, once the programme guidelines were approved, the team had a relatively free hand in discussing what should, or should not, go on air (Interview: Abu Jarad, 2013).

In the period under review, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* had norms and practices within its production unit that were similar to those of *Burning Brands*. The producer, Ayman Al Amriti, followed specific procedures and consulted with the head of programming. Such discussions did not

need to happen often, as the General Guidelines of the ASC served as the ‘policeman’ governing the relationship between staff members, editorial decisions and media practices (Interview: Al Amriti, 2013).

Unlike in cultural programming, in children’s programming ASC producers may sometimes have had more room to use creativity in amplifying their messages than was the case in the PSC (Abuzanouna, 2012). This came about through ‘personal influences which seem[ed] to be singularly effective’ and which brought about a ‘reinforcement function’ (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 2006: 82-83). This was the case, for example, in the previously mentioned decision made in 2007, that the puppet Farfur would no longer appear on the show after he was killed (in the show) by an Israeli interrogator. This decision to write Farfur out of the show raised a lot of questions and some were too harsh on Palestinian TV, inciting Americans to take legal action against the ASC for copyright issues (Perlmutter, 2014). Eventually, the producer’s decision was that Farfur would indeed be killed during interrogations by Israeli security forces. This was a deliberate decision to address a larger political problem, the blockade on Gaza, a decision made by just one person in the team, the producer, and then approved by the rest. Later on, though, the new producer of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, Al Amriti (Interview: 2013), thought this had been an unwise decision.

These kinds of production-level decisions, which markedly reinforced a sense of vulnerable nationalism, not focused at all on the ‘internal threat’ of the other faction, can be said to have contributed overall to the defactionalisation of media content. This underlines the wider, depolarising role of satellite TV and how it presents and colours its cultural and children’s programmes. As already suggested, when the ASC received criticism from the global community, political leaders rallied to defend the show and the integrity of the producer (Abuzanouna, 2012).

In *Sesame Street*, production decisions were often made collectively and agreed on by all editorial staff with the *Sesame Street* director, Layla Sayeigh. Her own influence could also be seen, in how the programme was presented and formatted (Palestinian *Sesame Street*, 2012). For instance, one explanation given to me for the frequent use of the colour green in set design, art props and decoration, was that it was based on the producer’s personal affection for the style of the Indian *Sesame Street* (Interview: Sayeigh, 2013). The production team also engaged in some

community-based ‘testing’ of their values and characters. They organised meetings with the public, for example by going to schools, each new season, to show the Puppets, using different voices, outfits and styles, to gauge the reaction of the children and their preferences. This involved coordination with civil society organisations and the Ministry of Education in Ramallah. This kind of outreach, outside of the studio, was not done by *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. This was partly due to budgetary limitations, and partly to the more ‘traditional’ presentation styles favoured by the ASC in its programming. In the case of *Sesame Street*, the Palestinian production team had another set of external advisors, besides those in Palestine, and regularly consulted experts in New York (Cole et al., 2003) to ensure that the content was not outside the box of global *Sesame Street*. The *Sesame Street* production process thus was more complex, in that the producers had to film, screen, review, and reconfirm with the global editorial management in New York to get their approval (Interview: Sayeigh, 2013).

What emerges clearly from the content analysis and this ‘thick’ description of the production styles of each satellite TV station is that the PSC and the ASC each have their own organisational culture (Blank, 2011; Jamal, 2001). These cultures, in turn, influenced the content of the programming of the two Palestinian stations (D’Acci, 2004). In the period under review, the PSC and ASC each had distinct social and institutional constraints and outlooks, which became more apparent when the actual production process was discussed. After all, the processes of production involved constant ideological negotiations and ongoing discursive struggles between media practitioners and those who employed them, in which they either agreed to or rejected content (Hall, 2010).

The production of the four programmes during 2009–2010, a period of relative political calm between Fatah and Hamas, was reflected in many public calls for pulling together and promoting national reconciliation. *Cultural Flashes* was filmed in Gaza in a way that would not stir up attention of the Hamas’ *de facto* security apparatus, and work was not outsourced to external partners in Gaza. This was a form of compromise on the part of the PSC, which risked losing audience among Gazan viewers by broadcasting what could be seen as a West Bank-dominated cultural programme representing only one part of Palestine (Sakr et al, 2015). The PSC’s decision to focus production in the West

Bank, and not in Gaza, appeared to arise less from partisanship than from a the determination by the PSC not to exclude Gaza by confronting Hamas in the programme, and thus to appeal to Palestinian audiences over and above political parties, whether they were living under control of Hamas or not (Interview: Al Shafi).

In 2009-2010, the same kinds of compromises were made in relation to *Burning Brands*, in which the ASC compensated for a lack of face-to-face interviews by using satellite-transmitted interviews. This allowed live contacts, on the show, with poets and writers who could not be brought into the Gaza-located studio. Most surprising was that the ASC focused on writers, poets and storytellers from neighbouring countries, including Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. This, in itself, can be viewed as a form of defactionalisation since most of these individuals were not Palestinian and were unlikely to mention either Fatah or Hamas in their discussions. Moreover, these invited speakers were not directly affected by the factional conflict of the past, and focused mostly on the problems of the occupation and Israeli military, political and economic dominance (Baroud, 2015).

The absence of the rather more oppressed and marginalised Hamas-affiliated writers and poets in PSC's programmes also meant that there was less room for political squabbling and much more focus on Palestinian culture as broadly defined. By involving international poets and novelists like those screened from the USA, Germany, UK, France and Denmark, cultural programmes became the drivers of a period of defactionalisation of the media, after almost two years of polarising political strife between the two television stations and the factions that they were aligned with. Production divisions are interconnected with how the socio-historical context is interpreted and understood (Skuse et al., 2011; D'Acci, 2004).

In spite of continued, low-level, factional operations on the ground, the defactionalisation of the media thus continued. For example, *de facto* security operations by Hamas in 2008-2009 led to the idea being spread among people that having contacts with official bodies in the West Bank could be criminalised and could even be considered as a form of spying for the benefit of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in Ramallah. Ironically, the arrest of an ASC media crew by the Palestinian Authority, while appearing to be retaliatory, also made it harder for ASC producers to

complete any groundwork in the West Bank (Al-Omari, 2010). Ironically, this even helped to defactionalise production by diverting attention from the differences among Palestinians. Since it was difficult to invite West Bank artists, poets and intellectuals to appear on the show, the *Burning Brands* programme sought refuge in approaching Arabic cultural figures in a wider region.

7.7 Conclusion

Overall, Chapters 6 and 7 have addressed the two main research questions concerning the processes of content and production as personal-human and professional activities that were both influencing, and were being influenced by, cultural, economic, social and political forces. The findings were the result of interaction with media producers at all levels, of hundreds of hours spent on screening materials, looking for frequencies of occurrence of values in programmes, and of researching contexts surrounding production units.

This chapter has outlined an outstanding fact, which is simply that media professionals, cameramen, producers and programme directors working below the surface are the people who have the capacity, in theory, to make big changes to the degree of factionalisation of media content and production. For the sake of clarity and in offering credit to those on the unit, it should be said that production involved the creative cooperation of several other, unacknowledged, media practitioners, some of whom were not given any opportunity by their administration to speak on the record, even if their opinion and role was significant. Even an office guy making tea can affect the content by expressing independently what he saw and experienced, or shared in a public discussion on the street, waiting for the bus to bring his son home from school. In Chapters 6 and 7, content has been analysed, and a basis has been laid for asking and answering the questions reiterated at the start of Chapter 6, about hegemony, decision-making, media production and content in children's and cultural media of the ASC and PSC in particular.

The next chapter moves somewhat beyond the frameworks of production circuits and content analysis, to explore the emergence of a form of media 'Palestinianism', as identified by looking at themes that arose in the ASC's and PSC's satellite TV programmes during the

research period of 2009-10. Built on the 'ashes' of factionalism, the next chapter suggests that new patterns of cross-Palestinian identification are starting to emerge across satellite TV production. The significance of 'Palestinianism' is explained more generally in Chapter 8, which precedes the overall Conclusions presented in Chapter 9.

8

Circuits of Media to Palestinianism(s)?

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, it is suggested that from the analysis of media content it can be concluded that there are signs of compromises, and that there is a willingness to set aside factional differences, leading to not only defactionalisation in the media, but also something more. The idea of the emergence of new forms of Palestinianism, and the question of how to define Palestinianism, were touched upon in Chapter 3. This relatively new set of ideas about nationalism can be seen emerging across media in the occupied territories in recent years. This chapter highlights some manifestations of such “Palestinianism” (Matar, 2010; Said *et al.*, 2000), as a new kind of nationalist ethos, led by political parties and not by factional interests alone. What also may make the media in Palestine somewhat different from the usual forms of media, is that profit-maximisation and high audience-rating are not the only considerations for them in terms of being ‘successful’ (Alshaer, 2012). In particular, encouraging viewers to retain their sense of solidarity with other Palestinians, and hoping for a better future, are two of the key goals.

This chapter returns to some central questions of the study, and starts with discussing the key economic and political factors that have shaped television production decisions and processes in the selected programmes. The question of how non-dominant groups have influenced both content and production is also addressed in this chapter, with a focus on the women’s movements, religious minorities, intellectuals and artists. Diverse voices, as represented in the selected programmes, are identified and their bearing on the defactionalisation of the media is analysed. These diverse voices, from both in and outside Palestine, include the contributions of children, of women, of

intellectuals and artists. All are critical in contributing to a lessening of factional content and production.

The issue of domestic, regional and international competition for audiences among satellite TV stations like the ASC and PSC is placed in a wider context. The chapter reviews some technological influences and constraints on media production, as well as the relations between media production and the various security apparatuses in the region. In addition, financial constraints, which may have contributed to defactionalisation of content and production of children's and cultural TV programming, are discussed.

8.2 Multiple or Singular? Palestinianism(s)

The emerging forms of 'Palestinianism,' or new nationalism, are also fuelled by rising and already pre-existing anger against Israeli policies, military occupation and attacks. The emerging Palestinianism is perhaps more moderate in that the emphasis is no longer on over-running Israel and driving out Israeli Jews, but on empowering Palestinians through expressions and practices aiming at greater national unity.

The defactionalisation of media content and production is thus about seeking a common national interest across spatial and political boundaries. When Israel is seen undertaking humanitarian work in Syria and helping refugees from regional conflicts, but, at the same time, imposing harsh economic and humanitarian restrictions on the life of Palestinians, especially those in Gaza, responses of anger and resentment become understandable. In the long run, anger with Israel may increase, and come not only from the ASC's more Islamic and religion-grounded understanding of Palestinian national identity, but also from the PSC, which relies heavily on funding from European donors, some of who are also engaged with the new awareness of a common Palestinian identity.

Palestinianism as a new form of nationalism could thus arise from, and pose renewed challenges to, the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Less factional and less securitised media content also means that there is a common cause and a sense of being opposed to whatever ideas are coming from Israel as the occupying power. This renewed sense of a common cause can already be seen quite clearly emerging in media content of the Palestinian satellite TV stations, the ASC and the PSC, as

was evident from interviews conducted for this study, and the content of the children's and cultural TV programmes broadcast by the two stations.

The old Palestinian nationalism, as opposed to the new Palestinianism, was arguably more secular. Nonetheless, like the old nationalism, Palestinianism, the relatively new forms of nationalism, also appear to have their roots firmly anchored in the language and history of the Palestinian people and territories. However, this new form of Palestinianism differs from the older kind in that Palestinian society is something that Palestinians can create themselves, and in which, in spite of Palestinians' obvious geographical divisions and their wide dispersal, members of society can connect with one another without the need for political or other mediating institutions. This is one of the key benefits of new forms of media technology, as will be discussed in this chapter. Also, thanks to changing technologies, exchange of ideas among the PSC and the ASC is constant and on-going, as well as between both Palestinian channels and Israeli channels.

Palestinianism can be linked to a renewal in social values in both children's and cultural programmes, and, as such, reflects social norms and conventions '...produced at the level of the overall production process – in the myriad imperatives that directly govern the construction of audiences and programmes' (D'Acci, 2002:93).

Bringing media agendas and discourses back into the normal flow of debate in the public sphere of politics, is a special challenge under Israeli occupation. Some media scholars may reject the (documented) suggestion of this study that there has been significant defactionalisation of the Palestinian media, especially in the period under review. Some scholars see this approach as unworkable and unrealistic with regard to achieving political change in Palestine (Kempf and Thiel, 2012; Möckel, 2007). The question is how media can be viewed through the lens of producing alternatives that can result in the 'unmaking' or dismantling of the logic of securitised factionalism. Borrowing from 'securitisation theory,' citing the view of Aradau, de-securitisation becomes '...a matter of different speech acts, which one could privilege depending on external, pragmatic criteria, for example how much attention we want to capture for an issue' (Aradau, 2004:393).

There is surprisingly little factionalism among the media expressions of public opinion leaders in the region, and this is perhaps because

competition for audiences mainly involves emerging TV stations that compete with those of similar religious and political mind-set – the *Al Filisteneya* TV with the PSC and the *Al Kitab Satellite Channel* with the ASC. In both cases, the emerging, competing satellite TV channels are engaging in similar debates with their localised competitors, but with less explicitly political rhetoric being involved. This chapter also reflects on how gender inequalities deeply ingrained in society also arise in the production and content of satellite TV programmes. '(P)roduced at the level of the overall production process – in the myriad imperatives that directly govern the construction of audiences and programmes,' social values related to a renewed sense of Palestinianism, in both children's and cultural programmes, involve the reflection of social norms and conventions (D'Acci, 2002:93).

8.3 Diversified Palestinianism: Women's Voices and Gender Issues

From a broader theoretical perspective, as stated by D'Acci (2004), TV history in general is less the product of professional authority and expertise, and more a process that is deeply embedded in social structures and cultural values. The role of TV, from this perspective, is also to raise wider public awareness of the struggles faced by socially underprivileged groups, including women. This starts with women who are themselves working in the media industry and particularly in television. The aim of encouraging such women as 'to achieve not only equality of representation on screen but equality of participation in the creative and production process behind the screen' is an on-going effort, and is not entirely successful in Palestinian satellite TV media, even today (D'Acci, 2004:67). The reasons for this may include the fact that fewer women than men are trained in media-relevant professions, but so far, this problem has been little researched.

In looking at all four programmes together, as shown in Table 7 (Appendix 6), content analysis showed differences in terms of the rates of men and women's participation. Ideally, the element of gender and the role of women in the 4 programmes should have been differentiated vis-a-vis the values that were selected as content analysis parameters, as well as with regard to each of the four programmes studied. Nonetheless, it was noted that the lowest level of participation of women

was in *Burning Brands*, in which it was zero, with men monopolising the programme completely. In the case of *Cultural Flashbes*, female participation in the overall programme was much higher than that of their male counterparts, with women figuring in 90% of all episodes (all but one.)

In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, boys participated as guests in all but one of the selected episodes (95%), while girls were guests in just over one fifth (21%) of all selected episodes analysed in this study. In *Sesame Street*, the overall participation of boys was 39%, while girls appeared in 56% of the selected episodes analysed in this study. These findings suggest that content is not entirely up to the media producers, particularly in live programmes such as *Burning Brands* and *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, in which ordinary people also decided on the content. For example, a young girl called in from Algeria talked about how proud she was of Palestinian resistance in episode PoT10. The ASC's programme editors did not seem to appreciate this intervention, but since she was a listener/viewer, her contribution could not be avoided. In the same episode, Nassur, the puppet, tried to cut this conversation short, but in such circumstances, editorial intervention may not always work. However, *Sesame Street's* curriculum committee can decide on content, and whatever is not covered by the general guidelines, will not be included in the show. This results in less room for diversified influences on programming content. In this sense, *Sesame Street's* content is much more controlled, and more gender-sensitive perhaps, in any case alert to the need to make space for girl listeners/viewers and participants.

The example of Palestinian poet Fadwa Tuqqan, in Episode 13 of *Cultural Flashbes*, shows how, also among women producers in *Cultural Flashbes*, the women's movement is mainly viewed through the lens of Palestinian national independence. Productions by women mainly addressed the independence of Palestine and only indirectly dealt with women as independent from and equal to men, as media professionals, highly capable of making major contributions to Palestinian media and society. The PSC's *Cultural Flashbes* had female producers at its disposal and featured female artists, poets and authors in its content. It brought previously unknown, talented women to the attention of audiences.

It seems that the host of the programme, Amani Abu Hantash, made a great effort to ensure that women had a role in every *Cultural Flashbes* episode. However, female actors were more visible in content,

and sometimes in a rather challenging manner, than in production. For instance, in episode CF17, Abu Hantash quoted the female author Ghada Al Saman when she commented on the game of soccer: ‘As an author, I look at a football game, as a cat looks at a tasty piece of cheese – the size of a soccer field.’ This episode showed that soccer does not just promote the ‘culture of masculinity,’ but that it, rather, shows the game of life, with its players (i.e., the people in daily life) experiencing crowdedness, contradictions, small joys and disappointments, on a field that is represented by the screen of the TV set.

The women’s movement criticised soccer, as being not only a symbol of masculinity, but also a centre for government support, in which the high contract value of soccer players is considered as more precious than, for example, the cultural value of famous works of art. The massive crowds attracted to soccer games were compared to the smaller crowds that routinely attend arts and cultural events. This highlighted that fewer people seem interested in cultural events than in sports. The fears of the women’s movement were apparent in terms of content. In general, there is a very active participation of women in Palestinian art, poetry, education and in cultural sciences. This is, however, much more visible in the West Bank than in Gaza.

A comparison of male and female participation the *Cultural Flashes* programme showed a quite balanced gender mix in most episodes. There were some exceptions, as in episodes CF07, CF11 and CF20, in which relatively fewer women appeared or talked. There were critical points in episodes, when the content covered women who were challenging the poetic discourse and the non-obedience to the rules of language in poetry, and justified this by saying that if there is no destruction there can be no construction, or reconstruction. In *Cultural Flashes*, women had little fear of being excluded from the content, regardless of the theme addressed in that content. They played their role in discussions about poetry, plays and novels, and, rather more explicitly, in debates about the reconstruction of the Palestine nation.

Burning Brands, in contrast, showed very little content that was about women, or in which women participated, neither as producers, nor as presenters, guests or contributors. During the course of the episodes viewed for this study, only once, in episode BB20, did the show talk

about women at all, and then it was in general terms, in relation to love. On this occasion, the poet Samir Al-Omari described women as follows:

‘hey you, the safe arms for my alienation...you have grown up in my heart as branch lover... and from all the worlds you have carried my fruits... 20 years or more you have been in my soul and my heart, my star and my surroundings... You have fed me until I have shown my eternal love... you have drunk until my birds have flown away... I see you the queen of beauty and other women in your lifetime are servants.’

Later on in the same episode (BB20), the host, Abu Jarad, expressed his admiration for the guests, for sharing this conservative poetry. He stated that ‘several contemporary poets have written about women, like Qabbani, who said he would build from women’s skin a dress, and from women’s nipples a mountain... this was strange, but the poetry you (i.e., the guest on the show) provided is not problematic.’ The guest commented that poets like Qabbani humiliate women and do not respect them, and stated: ‘...they are the mothers of their children, the wives who raise the children and make men the pillars of life.’

This lack of focus on women was and is attributable to the ASC’s generally more Islamic approach to the programming of content. Classical Arabic poetry is supposed to be recited by men, and the producers explained that they do not invite female authors to talk in the show, since:

‘if I do that, I will be placing myself in an embarrassing situation in case I invite a woman with revealing clothes or who wears too much make-up onto the show... and it could be that the audience of the programme will reject this’ (Interview: Abu-Jarad, 2013).

This approach is based on strict Islamic principles and thinking, according to which breaking of linguistic rules in Arabic (e.g., recitation by women instead of by men) is similar to giving way to nationalistic principles. Both are to be avoided equally, and at all costs. This does not necessarily imply that *Cultural Flashes* gave way to nationalistic principles, but it was much more apparent in *Cultural Flashes* than in *Burning Brands* that the women’s movement was making many changes to Palestinian intellectual life and had to be reckoned with.

In contrast, in *Burning Brands*, female participation, as shown in Table 25 in Appendix 6, was significantly absent in both production and content. In a few instances, women were simply mentioned, for example,

as in a poem entitled ‘The Daughters of the Land’, written by male Palestinian poet Samir Al Omary, and presented on the show as worthy of praise (BB20). The poem describes Palestinian female prisoners in Israeli jails as women who bring joy to the hearts of Palestinians. In this poem, women are presented as symbols of freedom and victory. This particular content was presented because of the surrounding, political context. If prisoner exchange deals would not happen, we would be less likely to hear about Palestinian women prisoners, freed after Palestinian factions agreed to the release of one captured Israeli soldier in exchange for the release of 19 Palestinian female prisoners in 2010 (Abunimah, 2011).

Unlike cultural programmes, children’s programmes focused little on women as a non-dominant group, with the exception of the attention paid to the preferences of female character Sara and other female children in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. Likewise, in *Sesame Street*, the female puppet Haneen contributed to the content of entertainment and education in small ways. For example, in episode SS019 she discussed the ‘love of music’ and told all children that they can love and enjoy music despite living in difficult conditions and under constant fear.

Young women too have played a part in shaping media content. In an episode of *Cultural Flashes*, CF07, the experience of a young female novelist, Ilian Bader, was brought to attention. In her writing, family structure was described as a form of prison, and school as restricting her creativity. She explained that she had to make her own way through these institutions to find an escape toward creativity by writing a novel. Her book, *Pieces of Sugar*, questions the existence of love, talks of forbidden love, discusses Allah and other sets of ideas, things that were beyond discussion for any young woman from a more conservative Palestinian family. The terminology used by her suggests that she was striving to balance expression and thought in the novel, and that she did not accept that ‘she should shut up.’ So, it was a rather challenging message, one that encourages women to speak out, that came across from the content of *Cultural Flashes*.

In *Cultural Flashes*, much more than in *Burning Brands*, the producers seem to have focused on variation in the production of episodes, by involving new kinds of people, especially those from younger generations, in the art, poetry, drama, folklore and silent tragedy features.

In *Cultural Flashes*, young people were not viewed as representatives of a homogeneous group, but as unique individuals, each of whom had his or her own diverse and different style. This countered the idea that all human beings, males and females alike, should necessarily think or feel in the same way, or that their artistic or creative work should conform to a single pattern. According to the head of the PSC's cultural programming, Al Asfar: 'During the period of broadcasting, *Cultural Flashes* scored the best rating in the history of Palestinian TV, and that is because of its openness and increasing interest in cultural affairs, in addition to diversified programming' (Interview: Al Asfar, 2013)

In another episode (CF013), content focused on a boy flirting with a girl, with both showing interest in making more physical contact, leading them to making love. These attentions or acts were presented as innocent and natural, although such things are not commonly addressed, at least not openly, in a conservative society like that of Palestine. The content went on to justify the innocence of a girl falling in love, and making love, and asked why it was that she was killed for this innocence of love and emotions. A comparison was made between this story and similar events in the outside world. The producers selected this content to focus on people who want to change a mostly conservative society. The episode referred to the real-life case of 14-year old Asya, who had a love affair with a man she was not married to, and whose baby, after having being born, was thrown into the sewage by relatives. The young mother herself was then killed by her family.

In its content, *Burning Brands* continued to express admiration for women in poems. For example, in a poem, a woman might be described as the person who offers comfort to a man in exile. An Islam-inspired programme like *Burning Brands* is not supposed to cite poems by Nizar Qabbani. His poems are known to be very passionate and open on love and women. Mentioning a Qabbani poem in itself represents a compromise made in the content, but in *Burning Brands* this was done to create a form of contrast between Qabbani's passionate style and that of the more rational ballad-style poems. For example, Qabbani, who is often quoted in the PSC's programmes, is criticised by the ASC for describing a woman's body, skin and sexuality in his poems.

There is a link between factionalism and gender, in the sense that men tend to be more factional than women. This argument on a Palestinian gender perspective can be substantiated on the basis of research done by

Julie Peteet (1991:5), who showed evidence of how Palestinian ‘women’s political participation informed a realignment and, in part, a reconceptualization of gender relations.’ There is also a link between defactionalisation and gender, in the sense that women contribute more to defactionalisation than men do. While the reviewed ASC programmes did not show this connection, the PSC programmes did, as the latter involved more women voices, which tend to convey less factionalism than those of men, in terms of content. On the other hand, when the ASC’s media producers refuse to allow women in the cultural programme, does this mean that the ASC’s programme is necessarily more factional? This would only be the case if the religious principles were interpreted in a way that was overly hostile or oppositional to Fatah or to the PSC; on the whole this does not seem to be the case as the detailed media content analysis has shown.

Unlike in *Cultural Flashbes*, in *Burning Brands*, there was zero involvement of women in the content. This difference has certainly shaped the content of both programmes in a profound way. Although in both programmes male staff was involved at all levels, the content of *Cultural Flashbes* was co-shaped by the views of female poets and artists, bringing new discussions and topics such as women in Palestinian society, sexuality and family. *Burning Brands*, by comparison, appeared to be more ‘dry’ and focused only on the literature of resistance against the occupation. *Cultural Flashbes* introduced more diverse voices, contributing to a wider content, with wider concepts and a more rounded set of in-depth discussions on many values, by strongly opinionated female writers and a young woman sharing poetry of love, and in relating, for example, the story of a woman who had travelled, on her own, to London and further, to explore the world (CF 11). Suad Sabbah’s poems were shared in the same episode, where she said:

‘Who will rescue me from European rains after your departure? Who will be my roof...my umbrella? Who will hide me in the pocket of his coat...or under the leather strip of his watch...when the winds strike me...and the storm bites me?’

This content is considered more ‘liberal,’ unlike the more ‘conservative’ content of *Burning Brands*, which barely mentioned women at all.

8.4 Palestinianisms? Religion, Religious Minorities and Voices of Intellectuals

Religious minorities were given little attention in both programmes' content. Therefore, detecting and determining the influence of religious minorities' men and women on content or production was nearly impossible. One exception was the head of *Sesame Street*, who is a Christian woman from Ramallah and plays a significant role in directing the programme's production. More generally, religious minorities are not presented as such. Members of religious minorities, for example Christian artists, came into the shows as 'Palestinian' nationals, and hence it was hard to spot them unless you were familiar with their backgrounds, and/or were able to distinguish 'Christian' names from Islamic names. Overall, however, religious minority groups would not be expected to contribute significantly to the content of the programmes. When they did contribute, it was as 'embedded' Palestinian nationals, with a sense of 'Palestinianism,' rather than as representatives of minorities as such. For instance, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* cited one of Mahmoud Darwish's most famous poems on Palestinian identity and nationalism.

'Record!

I am an Arab
 And my identity card is number fifty thousand
 I have eight children
 And the ninth is coming after the summer
 Will you be angry?

Record!

I am an Arab
 Employed with fellow workers at a quarry
 I have eight children
 I get them bread
 Garments and books
 from the rocks.
 I do not supplicate charity at your doors
 Nor do I belittle myself at the footsteps of your chamber
 So will you be angry?

Therefore!

Record on the top of the first page:
 I do not hate people
 Nor do I encroach
 But if I become hungry
 The usurper's flesh will be my food
 Beware.
 Beware.
 Of my hunger,
 And my anger!

The selection by producers of this particular poem feeds into one narrative: emphasising Palestinian identity and national discourse. Any language mistake made by one of the children in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* is often corrected by Sara, who repeats it, this time in classical Arabic. In another episode, a child called in from West Bank indicated that she wanted to offer a 'song,' and Sara offers a correction by saying: 'You mean a psalm. Go ahead' (PoT08). *Sesame Street* producers, on the other hand, do not mind the 'un-Islamic' idea of using 'songs' and secular music, which tend to be made for children's entertainment and fun. In *Sesame Street*, it is hard to tell what type of audience is watching the show, as there is no live interaction with the viewers. However, in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, incoming phone calls show that there are children watching in several Arab states outside of Gaza and Palestine.

As can be seen in Table 1 (Appendix 6), my content analysis showed that in all four programmes, only 8.0% (on average) of the total content harboured explicitly religious references. The researcher finds this result not surprising, unlike media producers and political elites of both the PSC and the ASC, who, in interviews, found this relative lack of religious content in children's and cultural programmes, a problem. As the head of cultural programming of the PSC, Al Shafi, stated: 'I see this as an error that has nothing to do with donor policy – it is only the mind-set of producers which influenced this content' (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). Nonetheless, in going deeper into the data, to show how religious content was referred to, we found that Hadith sayings appeared in 10% of all children's shows, while the Quran was mentioned in 13.5% of the children's programme episodes. Reference to religious Quran and Hadith sayings does, of course, not necessarily correspond with explicit religious values. It happened often that the Quran or the Prophet Mohammed

was mentioned, but with no value associated to it. For example, Sara, in a *Pioneers of Tomorrow* episode (PoT04), which talked about the virtues of fasting during the Ramadan, mentioned the name of Allah, merely as a saying. There was no value added to it, nor was it part of a new lesson for the children to learn. The name of Allah was merely mentioned.

As shown in Table 7 (Appendix 6), factional leaders and religious figures were not referred to explicitly in any of the four programmes, neither in the children's nor in the cultural ones. In response to the research sub-question about women and minorities, this tends to suggest that the influence of religious minorities in content and production will be indirect and is not visible in explicit terms. This also came across clearly during interviews and during the observation of the production at both stations, in which religion was taken for granted by most of the media producers, and there were very few signs of deliberately driving a religious agenda, also not by members of religious minorities. The only occasions where religion seemed to be playing a significant role was when, in the ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the show happened to coincide with the timing of the *Asr* prayers, almost two-thirds of the time, as shown in Table 15.

Some 17% of all breaks in the 4 programmes were used to call for prayers, whereas 28.5% were of the regular TV break type. Regular TV breaks are necessary for conducting essential services such as giving the staff some rest, checking the equipment, changing the set-up of the stage, etc., but also the breaks for prayers were important to producers.

The break for prayers is unavoidable in the case of an Islamic TV station, such as the ASC. There could have been no compromises in that regard, as the producers felt it was their duty to notify people that it is time for prayers. Although children are not strictly expected to go to the mosque, children must be made aware of prayer time, not only during their daily routine, but also during their TV show.

8.5 Children's Voices and Palestinianism

As far as children's programming was concerned, producers focused heavily on the involvement of children, in being the main voice in the show, as would be expected. In 100% of all shows, *Sesame Street* relied on children's voices (43.5% male and 56.5% female). In *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, apart from presenter Sara herself who is a girl, 95.7% of the episodes

featured children, with female children appearing in only 21.7% of the episodes. As mentioned in previous chapters, the discussions in the shows focused mostly on education, on respectfully helping the older generation, on Eid celebrations, on how not to lie and hold good morals, on science, on learning new vocabulary and on entertainment in which children can sing, dance and express themselves.

Media producers can never be entirely in control of content. They have the ability to edit the content of pre-recorded interviews, but that option is not available for live television shows, such as *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. The final content, however, is also determined by the presence of new voices, who may sidetrack the decisions of producers. In episode PoT13, *Pioneers of Tomorrow* brought in children from refugee camps to talk about how to be honest and not lie. If it would have been only Nassur and Sara talking in the programme, it would have been unlikely that they would have added a new perspective to lying as a bad social habit that children should avoid. The children from the refugee camps did bring that new perspective. The children's contributions in the show, especially from those who were calling in by phone, were inspired by what their parents or siblings told them about what to say and how to respond to questions from Nassur and Sara in the studio. In *Sesame Street*, as shown in episode SS02, content was also shaped by the introduction of a new aspect of disability, which was noticeably missing from *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. In the show, children learned about the use of Braille, text in which characters are represented by patterns of raised dots that can be read by blind people. The involvement of new voices, those of blind children, influenced the content of the programme, by showing that blind children are important members of society too, and are an asset to the community, not to be ignored.

This is to say, the sharing of personal experiences throughout the four children's and cultural TV programmes studied has helped shape their content, as is shown in Table 9 (Appendix 6). Some 36% of the total appearances by guests on the four shows were meant to share a personal experience that the person went through and was ready to talk about in front of the camera. Some 22.5% of the participants expressed their views on matters that were tabled for discussion. The PSC's *Cultural Flashbes* most frequently reflected the views of people on movies or plays they had watched, or on music (played by foreign music bands) or poetry

they had listened to. The combination of sharing personal experiences and sharing views contributed to shaping the content of the (factional) media. At any rate, those that were interviewed during the show left little room for producers to factionalise content. After all, average Palestinians escape factionalism at work and in the streets, and run to watch entertainment and then tend to express their views only on what they saw.

8.6 Palestinianism: The Role of ‘Domestic,’ Regional and International Competition

Among the factors that influenced the content of the PSC’s and ASC’s programmes, that have been analysed in this study, was: competition. Each of the two satellite stations felt compelled to respond to the other station’s content, overall tone and approach. All components of competition are present: two audiences, each supporting their own channel, and producers from two different political backgrounds. In the period under review, each wanted to stave off the competition. This section shows how this competition can change both content and production. In fact, the interviews done for this study revealed how strongly competition between the two stations has influenced content and production processes.

For every television station, the ultimate goal is to achieve the best reputation possible and this can only be achieved through maximum audience numbers. For this, the television station’s broadcasts must compete with what other television stations are broadcasting, to the entire, possible audience. In a smaller context, such as that of Palestine, one can see forms of wide-ranging competition, with stations vying for the same audiences. The ASC and the PSC, each representing the views of a major political party, Hamas in the case of the ASC and Fatah in the case of the PSC, which are in competition on the ground (Alshaer, 2012), feel that the least they can do, on air, is to compete and show their best sides, and seek to gain audiences for their programmes.

Even within a conflict area such as occupied Palestine and especially in Israeli-blockaded areas, like Gaza and parts of the West Bank, market pressures can play a vital role in shaping media content. However, competition, as something structural to the media, was not emphasised overtly during interviews (Interview: Al Asfar, 2013), maybe because it

seems to be part of the reality of every day, and is mostly taken for granted by producers and media professionals, like the eternal lack of resources. Ironically, perhaps, competition arises more in a situation of constant unrest, with its constant stream of breaking news, a situation that has been experienced in Palestine for decades.

Both the ASC and the PSC view each other as competitors as to who produces the most widely accepted media messages to the public (Sienkiewicz, 2012). By utilising all methods of communication, such as SMS and social media, to alert the public to events anticipated, pending or actual, the satellite TV stations expand the culture of competition that starts with media programming. Thus, for example, the ASC aired a show called *Al Aqsa this morning*, which arose from competition with the PSC's *Good morning Palestine*. Each station competes for being the favoured messenger. There is a sense of competition for viewers, which is apparent in children's programming as well as I cultural programmes (Hroub, 2012).

This constant competition has compelled the producers of both channels to look at each other's popular content and adjust and expand their own repertoire of programming to include a wider set of cultural values, so as to appeal to more audiences. For example, the ASC's programmes started to include coverage on Lebanese, Qatari or Jordanian poets, whereas the PSC started to rely on narratives of Palestinians from Germany, France, Spain and Portugal (Salama, 2006).

Competition in the context of Palestine seems to be guided by a 'national line,' which helps to determine media content (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013). As Al Shafi, head of PSC programming, explained, the producers of cultural and children's shows are generally quite aware that there are different understandings of the 'national line.' Some of these are more inspired by Islamic nationalism, others by more secular forms of nationalist rhetoric. The producers working with the ASC and PSC are generally obliged to conform to the 'party line' of their own media group. Thus, 'domestically' they have to show that they are closely following, or working within the limits of, the official position of the party or 'party line.'

This form of competition usually occurs at different levels, from the domestic one to the regional and international ones. However, much of the competition between the PSC and the ASC is at a domestic level,

since it is more or less unavoidable that media producers of the ASC are aware of the PSC's programming, and vice versa. In a relatively small area like Palestine, as the heads of programming of both the ASC and the PSC confirmed, producers are rapidly informed of the same events and receive immediate public reactions from their communities and the people they meet in the streets (Interviews: Al Bardawil, 2013; Al Shafi, 2013). Neighbours and relatives are not the only source of feedback, however. Both TV stations have created small teams of journalists who form monitoring units. Their role is to watch their rival station's broadcasts and summarise the breaking news. This enables satellite TV stations to more systematically follow each other's broadcasts across regional and international media channels.

Competition also occurs at a regional level. The ASC's *Burning Brands* does mimic some of the tactics of Al Jazeera, for example, by employing similar settings. Likewise, *Sesame Street* producers feel that, in order for them to maintain a good profile within the *Sesame Street* workshop, they must compete with Israeli, Jordanian and Egyptian television stations providing comparable programmes, in Arabic, for children. This explains why the content of children's programmes can appear to contain very little that is distinctly Palestinian in terms of content for the viewership. After all, it is not only Palestinians who watch *Sesame Street* or *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. These programmes must entertain international audiences, including Palestinians and others living across a range of Arab states and beyond, according to the head of the Palestine *Sesame Street* workshop (Interview: Sayeigh, 2013).

The evidence suggests that international competition occurs even more in children's programming than in cultural adult programming, perhaps because of the 'universality' of many of the educational values in much of the children's TV programmes. Clearly, both the ASC and the PSC feel they have a cultural identity they want to promote by featuring Palestinian intellectuals, artists and writers in their programmes. That is, by showing Palestine as a place where culture is flourishing, as explained by the producer-presenter of *Burning Brands* (Interview: Abu Jarad, 2013). This can make some programmes distinctly Palestinian, and reinforces the sense of a growing 'Palestinianism' in content and production decisions, as suggested by the title of this chapter. However, such Palestinian specificity in content is less apparent in the children's programming of both the ASC and the PSC than in their cultural adult

programming. Both channels show internationally recognised character types, resembling the universally appreciated puppets. It is in their best interests to compete on an international level for children's attention, at least in Arabic, and so to gain a greater slice of media viewership at little additional cost. *Sesame Street* in Palestine observes *Sesame Street* in Israel and India, while *Pioneers of Tomorrow* looks at Al Jazeera and Tour Al-Jannah or Jordanian children's TV programmes, as examples for its production values.

It is interesting to see how market competition may mitigate factionalism in content, since both the ASC's and PSC's producers may be aware that in order to appeal to global audiences they need to defactionalise content. Each channel seems to have made a deliberate attempt to prevent journalists from becoming involved in children's TV programming, so that journalists are restricted to political and political news production, and to some extent to cultural programming (Interview: Abu Jarad, 2013). By such means, both channels have managed to secure global audiences, adding to their reputations and their legitimacy. If they had operated only on a smaller, domestic level, producing TV programmes only for a local audience, and avoiding international audiences and thus media headlines and attention among other media outlets, then the ASC and the PSC would probably have remained, even in their children's and cultural programming, factional in both form and content. As it is, each receives global media attention as well as callers and listeners from around the world, including those who watch on-line. While there are no accurate records of audience sizes for such programmes, they are not likely to be small, given the good number of hits on YouTube (Abuzanouna, 2012).

For both channels, the competition among them and with other channels is not mainly about revenues or markets, though it is also about that. The motivation for satellite TV producers as well as journalists is about being able to reach the largest and most global audience of viewers (Tawil-Souri, 2011). The aim of being widely viewed affects content decisions, not so much in terms of what the editorial board wants or the political party linked with the station, but in relation to what other channels are broadcasting at that time. Sometimes producers are influenced by content elsewhere, to be seen as 'keepin up,' or being aware of debates from elsewhere.

During the study period, the ASC focused heavily on the importance of children knowing the holy and historical sites of Palestine. One might expect *Sesame Street* producers to maintain a globalised version of this, but instead, the programme producers showed a young boy walking around Jerusalem and pointing out the holy sites to the children watching. Episode SS14, for example, showed Adnan walking in the streets of the old city of Jerusalem. He says ‘that’s my house, it is 500 years old – my mom sent me to buy *labneh* (oil) and thyme – Jerusalem’s cake is famous because it is delicious.’ In another episode of *Sesame Street* (SS09), a girl discusses Palestinian traditional and historical costumes. The conclusion of this study is that rivalry, in terms of ‘keeping up’ with other stations, and with one another, has pushed both the ASC and the PSC to sometimes ignore their respective political parties and paymasters, and to provide content different from what one might expect in a more factionalised media set-up (Interviews: Al Shafi, 2013; Abu Shammalah, 2013).

The competition among both television channels has also forced producers to go beyond looking at only the usual methods of ‘naming and shaming’ opponents, towards learning from the experiences of other channels and other countries’ media. According to Al Asfar (Interview: 2013), in charge of cultural programming at the PSC, this includes learning from the Israeli media too:

‘we usually look at programmes that are broadcast by Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, and perhaps Lebanese TV stations more than Egyptian outlets...because we are always impressed by their research, preparations and the ability to attract celebrities in the cultural scene’ (Interview: Al Asfar, 2013).

Usually, since Israeli channels can afford the cost of first class travel and honorarium fees, they can attract important guests. Nonetheless, watching other channels, including Israeli ones, can help to improve production and programme content by learning from their style, their lay out and how they invite guests to the shows. Palestinian factions had to make the choice as to whether to stay within their own traditional media formats, or to broaden their platforms by using satellite TV, internet and web spaces. They have reached out to a broader public by announcing and notifying the public of what they can offer, and they hope to be able to compete.

8.7 Towards Palestinianism: The Role of New Technologies

Unlike the dominant thinking apparent among media scholars that technology has limited the role of traditional media like TV, this study has found that technology has actually helped expand the messages of satellite TV, as well as contributed to changing and developing the content (Tawil-Souri, 2009; Tawil-Souri, 2007). Instead of confining itself to the traditional interview setting, in the studio, children's and cultural programming has become more communicative and tends to jump from one topic to the next one quite smoothly. This is, in part, facilitated by the use of diversified technological tools, including editing and image manipulation tools. In addition, the content of media has widened from mainly localised content to a more regional and even globalised content.

Both the ASC and the PSC, as Palestinian media, have created landmarks in a cultural and historical context. Media content is shaped by interactivity and media is now very visibly aware of the relevance of bringing voices together to share views and influence the views of one another. For example, in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, the producer made the character Nassur display some socially unacceptable behaviour such as lying (as in episode PoT13). Very soon, telephone calls came in to express that what Nassur did was not correct or acceptable. This audience interaction with the media channel was immediately made visible on screen. In this way, the producer was able to show how the character's behaviour can be corrected, by using the possibilities opened up by technologically more advanced, interactive methods of programming.

Content in the four programmes would not have been as evidently powerful and effective during the study period, had the programme producers lacked the computer technologies of cable connection, satellite transmission technology, microwave technology and telecommunication and internet technology, all allowing for more direct communication between the producer and the audiences. Were it not for internet technology, defactionalisation might not have occurred as rapidly as it seems to have taken place in the year or two before the period of this study. For example, the PSC would have been unable to step outside of the box, to include a wider focus on international narrators, artists and authors. Similarly, the ASC would not have been

able to discuss 'modernism' in literature, removing itself from a narrow adherence to topics considered appropriate for an internal or 'domestic,' factional Fatah-Hamas debate.

The use of various forms of new IT technology means that content can be presented in a more exciting and stimulating manner, by which watching video-clips in combination with bright and colourful lettering, sounds and computer graphic imagery, can become irresistible, especially for younger viewers (and their careers.) Children tend to absorb the entire sensory intake. Clearly, the use of technology has been a significant factor in the on-going competition between both the PSC and the ACS (Alshaer, 2012).

Technology has brought interconnectivity between different individuals and added it into the narrative by presenting a new picture and pattern of life, in which audiences, both 'domestic' and international, can be heard, seen and responded to. This is not the traditional television programme setting of just two people in discussion, with a fixed audience rating, but a setting that has been opened up to more viewers and to speakers with a more diverse range of views and opinions, including women, artists and intellectuals, as well as children. The result is that, over the period of this study, each channel ended up using technological means to assist in producing a more diversified range of voices and contributions than was possible in the past. This clearly may have also helped to 'defactionalise' content. In any case, the advantage of this participatory element in new technologies cannot be overstated and should not be ignored by producers. After all, media technologies like satellite TV and internet have helped bridge the gap between two geographically separated areas: 'We never want a separation between children who watch us by telling them, you are from Gaza and you are from West Bank' (Interview: Al Shafi, head of PSC's cultural programmes, 2013).

The challenge ahead is not to test the potential of the technology as such, but to assess to what extent technology can affect content, both positively and negatively. This research suggests that, with regard to Palestinian satellite TV, new technologies have already contributed in two ways: (i) by maximising audience and (wider) participation in the content and (ii) by amplifying the message of TV programming beyond the domestic level, to the regional and international levels. Prior to the new technological era, the PSC's production crew relied only on

whatever resources were available in-studio, and used mostly materials immediately at hand in Palestine.

New technology in *Cultural Flashes*, for example, enabled programme presenter Amani Abu Hantash to sit behind a state-of-the-art Mac computer, and scroll down through all internet sites and encyclopaedias for information (Interview: Al Asfar, head of programming of the PSC in Ramallah, 2013). This meant she was able to dig deeper for details on arts, literature, poets and histories, than even the most up-to-date intellectuals would be able to deliver on the spot at that time. This signified the power of technology in invading the rooms of old Palestinian intellectuals who may think they know a lot about intellectuals around the world. It has also helped to mix the sense of Palestinianism with that of other cultures, not as well known to the younger generation.

In episode CF20 of *Cultural Flashes*, Abu Hantash, using her fingers on the keyboard and the mouse arrow on the screen, said: 'Slowly, we will flip through internet pages, so that we can discover together landmarks of culture and creativity.' As she scrolled down the screens of specialised websites, the producers were able to save on travelling expenses, and avoid the hassles of crossing militarised, physical, geographical borders. Travelling the websites, with the click of a finger (in episode CF08), Abu Hantash focused on a black American author, Rita Dove, and other scholars in India, Denmark, America, the Netherlands, Morocco and Iraq. If it were not for technology, global contributions like these would have been difficult to include in programme content. Technology has helped the PSC to present a wider range of viewpoints, and, for example, include views by Palestinian authors critical of the lack of governmental support for the arts. In this way, producers of both children's and cultural programmes have used forms of information technology to present wider views from viewers, intellectuals and other contributors, who may not even need to be invited to provide content.

As shown in, for example, *Burning Brands* episode 11, technology has enabled producers in both the PSC and the ASC to be more open to critiques themselves without being ashamed of it. They often got feedback from viewers. For example, in the same episode of *Burning Brands* (BB11), presenter Abu Jarad said: 'I want to be honest with the

viewers and also with ourselves, on: why do we always blame every failure and delay in culture, economy and social life on the [Israeli] blockade?’ In the pre-information-age technological past, television programmes would mainly focus on topics through the voice and opinion of a presenter, one person, usually in the studio rather than outside. Now the use of well-known editing programmes, such as Premier and Final Cut Pro, makes it possible for crews moving around in various locations to bring diverse voices directly into the production process.

When social media is used and people’s comments and opinions become visible on screen, to a wider public, editors and producers will find it harder to ignore the demands from the public. Hence, new forms of technology have helped to shape content materials and to introduce wider, more immediate (including live,) public voices into the studio. While previously they were an unusual practice in TV production, the live phone-ins of viewer’s comments have now become the norm.

According to Abu Jarad, both producer and presenter of *Burning Brands*, some of these advantages of technology can be used to break down old routines and professional boundaries (Interview: Abu Jarad, 2013). New types of thinking were introduced, not only by involving Islamic-oriented or Hamas-affiliated writers and poets but also through live satellite broadcasts, which have helped *Burning Brands* to include more interviews from Palestinians and others, also outside of the geographical confines of Palestine. These new guests were not directly involved in domestic Fatah-Hamas in-fighting and, therefore, as this research has shown, their involvement in the programme brought in views of those not immediately and locally ‘traumatised’ by the events of factional fighting. This makes such cultural programming appear as a platform for renewing political affiliations and demonstrating loyalty to the idea of Palestinian nationalism, in its Hamas-Islamic variants.

Technology has also helped the ACS’s production crew to combine the voices of guests who were physically present in the studio with the voices of a wider public, and with calls coming into the station in response to events in the programme and outside. In one episode (BB01), the presenter of *Burning Brands* managed to compensate for his guest’s lack of experience in the topic under discussion by involving Palestinian author Dr Fayez Abu-Shammalah in the

conversation. The latter's contribution was to emphasize the role of poetry in challenging the Israeli siege on Gaza and the dangers of the ongoing Israeli occupation. Dr Abu-Shammalah's contribution, by telephone, added content that would otherwise have been missing in the programme. And, by emphasising wider political values that were not clearly expressed by the studio guest, who presented his poetry and spoke of his own book, the phone call resulted in a more rounded perspective on the role of poetry in general, in Palestinian culture and political life. In this way, more diversity of content complemented and challenged those in the studio who were busy with the topic of the day.

Compared to *Burning Brands*, *Cultural Flashes* has relied much more on technology, by employing a far greater range of methods of finding information, including the use of social media. Yet, both the ASC and the PSC have selectively used YouTube videos in their cultural broadcasting, to enrich programme content. For example, in episode 11, *Burning Brands* showed a video clip of the poet Yasser Al-Atrash, in which he praises those 'martyrised' and the people of Palestine who remain, despite being harassed by the occupation. This same poet named and shamed Arabs in other countries in the region, for what he called giving up on Palestinian rights and not rising up against the Israeli occupation of Palestine. The surroundings the poet was living in made the content come across the way it did, i.e., as combative. The experience of living in exile forced this poet to come up with poems reflecting feelings that are unlikely to come from some other poet who is living inside Palestine.

In *Burning Brands* episode 1 (BB01), content included a combination of visual images clearly designed to show how modern software is used, and this was combined with Nasheed (Islamic or religious songs). A similar mix of elements was found in children's programming, where multiple cameras used in the studio, along with computerised games and cartoons, created a noticeable atmosphere of multi-dimensional entertainment in *Sesame Street*, according to head of PSC programming in Gaza, Al Shafi (Interview: 2013). Were it not for modern technology, children watching *Sesame Street* would most likely not have been able to experience the lives of children across the globe, whether in Japan or in the US. The same applies to *Burning Brands*, where most of the participation from outside the studio occurred via telephone calls coming

in from a wide range of countries, especially across the Arabic-speaking world (Abuzanouna, 2015).

8.8 A New Sense of ‘Palestinianism’ in the Media?

Overall, this research agrees to a large extent with the overarching theoretical presuppositions of Deuze (2011), as shown in *‘Media Life,’* where media has become omnipresent to a level at which people no longer just live with media content, but also within media context. Context here is seen as when people use the media in the context of their reality. The research on defactionalised media presented here takes Deuze’s argument one step further, in suggesting that media have become a means, for Palestinian people, to break restrictions imposed by the occupation (and sometimes restrictions imposed by inter-party factionalism as well) and to make media turn into an important part of the infrastructure of modern life, a distinctly Palestinian cultural institution, capable of expressing resistance to occupation, but also a great deal beyond that.

Burning Brands, in episode 7 (BB07), relied on the voices of experts and specialists, but rarely involved the voices of average citizens in discussions on intellectual issues. In episode 11 (BB11), however, the producers made the decision to open up to calls from the public. However, some of the calls bypassed the topic of the show, and this seemed to be the reason why producers did not continue with this approach. *Cultural Flashes* included ordinary grassroots citizens in 33.5% of the shows during the period of this study. Their content contribution mostly came from their public reflections and reviews after seeing plays, listening to music, watching movies and attending concerts.

Cultural Flashes episode 1 (CF01) showed a Turkish Oud musician playing music. The general public was interviewed during the show and asked to express their views. One person said about the performance: ‘This was very much needed to get away from stress and daily life routines.’ Of course, most of the feedback from the audience was positive, and full of praise for what had been viewed or heard. On other occasions also, Palestinianism was present, rooted in Palestinian arts, leaving no room for the squabbling between two factions. This was shown clearly in an episode of *Cultural Flashes* (CF10), in which a group of student artists, lead by Ramzi Abu Radwan, appeared on a stage in the

West Bank, singing 'hey people, leave me alone.' The song received appreciation as being a form of Eastern Palestinian music. By airing this scene, the producers seemed to want to express to the viewers that there is Eastern Palestinian music that should be studied in schools, and that it was time for people to pay attention to it.

Episode 9 (CF09), offered another form of Palestinianism, conveyed by a new film, 'To My Father,' by Palestinian filmmaker Abdelsalam Shadeh. The film documents the relationship between Palestinians and photographs for over 50 years. It looks at the daily life of Palestinians and at the political, social and economic changes and transformations that they endured over the years. To take an extract from the text of the film:

'When the Israelis occupied us in 1967, I felt there was an earthquake in my country, I was not able to understand why many people were running in the streets, not knowing where to go... people became afraid, even afraid to look at the photos – things have changed, our neighbour Abu Azoom was looking for his children.... Our neighbour Abu Samir has vanished, and I could no longer see the Egyptian officer that used to live next to us. His son Ashraf and I did not say goodbye. My sister also changed her clothes and wore my mom's dress. My brother was studying in Cairo and was not able to come back.'

The film represents a form of Palestinianism, by documenting, in every single scene, some aspect of the post-violence, 'cold conflict' of brothers, and expressing the desire for normality.

When interviewed for this study, the producers of children's programmes in both the West Bank and Gaza agreed that military occupation had shaped content in ways that tended to undermine the notion that TV for children can offer high ideals and principles, untainted by political realities:

'After all, Sara [main character of *Pioneers of Tomorrow*] is part of the real problem; she is the daughter of Rafah that has seen thousands of people injured and killed, and home demolitions – she stood on the ruins of homes to sing. She is part of the Palestinian tragedy' (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013).

In both areas of Palestine in which this research was done, production teams see living under Israeli occupation and being subject to

the harsh realities of the military and policing operations by the security apparatuses as making it almost impossible for children to grow up within a healthy atmosphere, protected against the brutal realities of the occupation (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013).

8.9 Palestinianism in the presence of Israel and Western States

The analysis of the content of *Sesame Street* showed that, during the selected period, the presence of Israeli soldiers was never explicitly mentioned in the programme. This silence about the presence of Israeli soldiers was explained as being due to external pressure applied by donors. Donors, who wanted to maintain the programme, and, in order to avoid problems, insisted that there should be no mention of the Israeli occupation. This, combined with internal pressure stemming from within the Palestinian authorities in the West Bank, resulted in a feeling at the PSC that producers should not politicise the content of children's programmes, so as not to jeopardise future funding prospects. According to the head of *Sesame Street's* Palestine workshop, Laila Sayeigh (interview, 2013): 'Other children's programmes focus all day on checkpoints. They are free to do so, but in *Sesame Street*, we focus on positive things.'

However, although explicit mention of politics may have been removed from *Sesame Street*, taking politics out of culture is much more challenging. After all, both Palestinian cultural life and Palestinian politics are deeply embedded in one another. Thus, TV producers often start their career by working under very strict surveillance by security apparatuses in the West Bank or Gaza, including military and police forces which could, in fact, cause direct threats to themselves and their families. Yet, most of the producers interviewed claimed not to fear the Israeli security forces (and their private contractors) and their ability to arrest, detain and otherwise harm them. Such heroic claims of not fearing the Israeli army and police are not entirely believable, however. If both the ASC and the PSC really were free of fear they would use new technologies to produce wider and more inclusive cultural programmes, in which the voices of more Palestinians, including those living outside Gaza or the West Bank, in Jerusalem and elsewhere inside Israel, would be heard. At present, it is easier to use new technology to link up

listeners in Saudi Arabia or Egypt with Gazan audiences, than to link them across Gaza, the West Bank and Haifa, for example.

The intention to challenge the presence of Israeli occupation forces and Israeli control of Palestinian mobility, is not disguised. When Sara said: 'We will pray at Al-Aqsa mosque,' this, although technically not actually possible for Gazans, was meant to express that one day Palestine will no longer be militarily occupied by Israel (PoT18). Sara embedded this idea in the minds and imagination of the children listening to the programme. As noted in Chapter 6, there is a need for children to work on freeing the mosque. Sara's saying was a revolutionary call to imagine the mosque as representing a Palestine that is besieged. The way in which this was framed made it appear as a duty and a call for action on the younger generation. It is fair to conclude that, if no security apparatus controlled Gaza as completely as the Israeli army now does, the political content of ASC children's programming would be much less explicit and obvious.

Producers themselves are aware of military occupation as an aspect of the daily reality that shapes media content in important ways. Producers may be offered training opportunities, for instance in journalism, whilst facing the reality that security apparatuses, both Israeli and Egyptian in the case of Gaza, actively close down all possible ways to reach the outside world. This impossible situation means that the ASC's production crews tend to vent their frustrations and anger with the situation in their content, bringing into children's and cultural programmes songs that challenge the 'prison guards' who occupy the Gaza Strip, and including narratives about Palestinian children who died, for example, due to a lack of life-saving medical supplies that Israel would not allow to pass through the checkpoints into Gaza. This particular incident took place in one episode of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* (PoT 22), that was broadcast during the period of study.

In moving beyond the usual 'box' of children's programme content, in the period under review, media producers at the ASC have also tried to maximise their use of the few remaining freedoms they have, despite the threat of 'security' measures against them. This was for example shown in episode PoT12, in which, as Sara commemorated Land Day, she insisted that: 'We will remain, we will remain in our land.' As the

producer explained, in this episode he consciously reproduced some visual images from a short Israeli television publicity film:

‘...I decided to respond to an Israeli TV ad... I used similar-looking children, a father who looked the same. Israeli news showed [this short film]...on Israeli TV, saying Hamas’ activists may be destructive but they are professional. In the first three days, 220,000 people viewed this short film on my personal facebook page’ (Interview: Al Amriti, 2013).

Of course, these negative and (unintendedly) positive influences were also mediated by the way in which the security apparatuses and the media themselves were funded. Without financial support from the US, for instance, the Israeli and Egyptian security forces would find it hard to operate as they do in Gaza and the West Bank. The PA is heavily dependent for all its activities on aid received from the West, especially from Europe (Zanotti, 2010). Hamas could hardly manage without funding and support from Iran and elsewhere (Yousef, 2015). The wider influence of funding arrangements and logistical support from the outside world on satellite media in Palestine is the focus of the next section of this chapter.

In ASC’s *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, there was massive focus on nationhood. Usually this was mixed with emotions, in which the lack of existence of a nation, due to the presence of the Israeli occupation, was highlighted with blame on large states. Political elites, as Al Bardawil (2013) said, want ‘their’ respective TV stations to focus less on internal political squabbling, and more on what unites Palestinians, such as images of Palestinian children as victims of the war. This politics of representation was very carefully managed in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, as shown (in episode PoT19) when producers presented an image of a Palestinian refugee as a victim of *Al Nakba*. The refugee said: ‘...not only me, but many are like me, of the Palestinian people who live their plight in bitterness and torture. May Allah break England, America, and Israel.’ This was said while images of poor people living in refugee camps were displayed, with typical shots of clothing hanging from rooftops.

None of the countries mentioned above was involved in funding the ASC during the period under review. The United States and United Kingdom were portrayed as enemies who supported the establishment of Israel. The PSC’s *Sesame Street* would not praise Israel, but would also never openly blame the United States for the situation in Palestine. After

all, *Sesame Street* was funded by the USAID, and the curriculum of *Sesame Street* was monitored by the *Sesame Street* workshop in New York, to ensure that there would be no form of incitement. The same logic applied to *Cultural Flashes*, in which the many activities in art galleries, theatres, musical events, and even around poets, that were mentioned, were from Western Europe and/or America. *Pioneers of Tomorrow* praised a lot of countries that children could consider capitals of the Muslim world, including Saudi Arabia, of which the towns of Jeddah and Medina were explicitly mentioned. Sara and children on the phone praised such countries for being respectful of Islam (PoT08). TV producers were interested in showing these cities as holy places. Perhaps, in this way, they also sought to educate Palestinian Muslim children in praying five times a day, emphasising at the same time one of the five pillars of Islam, the pilgrimage or *Haj* to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

In contrast with *Burning Brands*, which remained quite tightly focused on classical Arabic cultural expression, the PSC's *Cultural Flashes* included in one of its episodes (CF11) a representation of Danish and Spanish arts and poetry, without much reference to the shared history of Muslims in Spain. In contrast, in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, presenter Sara reminded viewers of the historical and cultural importance of Andalusia and Iraq, and indicated that these countries should fly the flag inscribed with 'No God, but Allah' (PoT07). There was a promise to the children that, God willing, the flag will be raised and Islam will be everywhere. This focus on the Islamic world and on the importance of religion as a basis for shared identity contrasted sharply with that of *Sesame Street*, in which, for example, Mongolian dancing was greatly admired (in episode SS17). In this episode, the children watched a Mongolian woman perform a traditional folk dance, balancing a pot on her head, and a child trying to do the same. This kind of diversity of representation in culture can be viewed, from one angle, as not relevant to polarising forms of media factionalism.

Whilst in *Sesame Street* (in episode SS17), Germany was introduced as a nice country with nice weather, and a people and culture that all children should be able to enjoy and learn from, this kind of positive representation of the West could hardly be found at all in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. This key difference between the PSC's and the ASC's politics of representation arose in large part from the very different social

context and upbringing of media producers in Gaza compared to the West Bank or Jerusalem, and also from the difference in the politics of funding of the two stations. This point was raised earlier in this chapter, in relation to the influence of the blockade and the security apparatuses on both PSC and ASC programme production. The ASC's producers hardly got any opportunities to travel outside Gaza, at least not legally, and the ASC station was (and is) still banned by the West since it was (and still is) linked to Hamas, according to the head of the Board of the ASC, Al Bardawil (Interview: 2013). This was the opposite for *Sesame Street*, where staff got more opportunities to exchange knowledge, travel and meet with other producers in workshops of *Sesame Street* in New York and other cities around the world, according to the head of *Sesame Street* (Interview: Sayeigh, 2013).

Pioneers of Tomorrow marked the 61st anniversary of *Nakba* in episode PoT19, in which the Puppet Nassur started to question all Arab leaders on why this injustice was inflicted on Palestinians as the world watched events unfold. He pointed to the continuation of Israeli occupation. The only form of solidarity that *Pioneers of Tomorrow* found was among like-minded children who were suffering and who were praised for their suffering and for sacrificing their lives in protest to injustice. This was, for example, expressed in 'greetings from children of Iraq, of Lebanon, Kashmir, and from Chechen children,' as the Puppet Nassur said, all of whom were represented as heroes who had sacrificed their life for freedom and for their country and its land (PoT19). As Puppet Nassur also emphasised in this episode: 'It is 60 years, Sara, and the world is watching us. The Arab leaders are watching... look how many wars have happened to us - the world is doing nothing!'

As emerged clearly from the content analysis presented in Chapters 6 and 7, the frankness about the politics of occupation and dying in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* contrasted with that in *Sesame Street*, in which there was almost no mention of Israel's existence at all. This might be viewed as deceptive, as presenting a fantasy life, which contrasted markedly with daily realities on the ground in the West Bank. However, in contrast to *Sesame Street*, the PSC's cultural programme, *Cultural Flashes*, on occasion, did raise some critiques of Israel. It could perhaps afford to do so, being significantly less restricted by donors' conditions and priorities for 'peace' than *Sesame Street*. As Chapters 6 and 7 showed, this was mainly done through the words of Palestinian poets and writers in exile, whose

work was covered in the show. Through their eyes, the cultural landscape and obstacles to self-expression of Palestinians were discussed. Such references were quite distinct, however, from those made in *Burning Brands*, in which the politics of representation explicitly and repeatedly reflected the ideology of Hamas and openly blamed Israeli occupation for taking away Palestinian rights, confiscating lands and trying to destroy a sense of cultural, religious and national identity (Arts et al., 2007).

8.10 Cultural Diversity and Palestinianism

While *Sesame Street* marked the Day of the Tree as a festival that ought to be recognised, in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* only Islamic Eids were celebrated, reflecting a common belief in Gaza that there was nothing left to celebrate but Eids. Even when discussing environmental values, and trying to teach children some useful lessons about how important it is to plant trees, *Pioneers of Tomorrow*'s producers again mentioned Israel as an entity that violated the laws of nature by using white phosphorus and depleted uranium as weapons during the war on Gaza (PoT12), thus damaging the natural environment as well. The *Pioneers of Tomorrow* presenter also referred to examples of environmental damage that resulted from the Israeli blockade and from demolition of Palestinian houses (PoT14), and the uprooting of trees for building the Wall and a security zone along it. *Sesame Street* and *Pioneers of Tomorrow* both talked about the importance of planting flowers and trees. However, whilst *Sesame Street* producers avoided all mention of Israel, the ASC attributed the environmental problems of Gaza squarely to Israel.

Promoting positive role models, *Sesame Street* (as in episode SS013, for example) involved celebrities who encouraged children to do their best. Thus, by introducing a famous singer, Reem Talhami, the programme tried to show children that they, too, could aspire to be like her one day, and can become famous singers if they develop their skills and work hard. When Kareem said that he did not know Reem Talhami, Haneen replied: 'Are you kidding? Reem Talhami is a big and famous Palestinian singer, she has a beautiful voice and she looks beautiful.' *Pioneers of Tomorrow* might not have found this acceptable, as Islamic Nasheed (confining music to koranic recitations) was presented as the artistic ideal in that programme. The producers of the ASC encouraged children to

become teachers who master the Arabic language, the language of the Holy Quran, and stimulated them to aspire to be leaders, scientists and teachers.

Whereas in *Sesame Street* producers tended to borrow materials from other countries, this was much less the case in *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, in which Palestinian children were the main focus, and were viewed through a lens of patriotism. In episode PoT21, for example, a widow's son is presented, whose father was killed in a previous war. In another episode (PoT14), the daughter of a Palestinian prisoner is introduced. In one case, the producers brought the young children of Hamas leader and Prime Minister, Ismail Hanyieh, into the studio, and presented them as the children of the leader, children who should follow the leader's path. In another episode (PoT20), 'the love of the homeland' was emphasised and the show indicated that there was no significant difference between the average Palestinian children and the children of political leaders like the youngest son of Ismail Hanyieh. The child was asked by the puppet to introduce himself and he replied 'Mohammed Ismail Hanyieh.' The puppet asked him to repeat that once again. He said in the same episode that he would never leave his homeland: 'This land is for all, and we should keep it all safe – I will keep resisting, to preserve my homeland.'

In *Sesame Street*, cultural diversity was celebrated, and the programme was structured to ignore politics and to focus on bringing educational tools to the children. *Pioneers of Tomorrow* producers criticised this kind of children's programme as a deliberate attempt to place children outside the realm of the real issues that affect them in their daily lives. The producers of *Pioneers of Tomorrow* claimed that the programme's contents were restricted to the daily realities that could be perceived by children in Palestine. The only opening to the world was a virtual one, in this case the telephone line which brought in the voices of child callers. All the décor and furniture on the set were hand-made locally in Gaza. It is on this basis that children learn principles and values, not from talking about the states and cultural habits of other countries. They claimed that:

'To show how much the Zionist enemy is a primitive one, I don't necessarily need to bring a Muppet and show it being stabbed by knives... but I would show a small girl going for her first day of school and a soldier stopping her on her way to school' (Interview: Al Amriti, 2013).

The producers of the ASC did not seem to see the lack of more diverse materials and the almost exclusive focus on Palestinian children's lives as troubling. They claimed that, after all, the programme was locally produced by a satellite TV station with a strictly limited budget, especially compared to the PSC's budget, which tended to be much higher. *Cultural Flashes* cost \$1,600 per episode, while *Burning Brands* cost \$300 per episode. *Sesame Street* refused to provide information on its finances, but is believed to have cost around \$10,000 per episode, while *Pioneers of Tomorrow* spent around \$300 on each episode (Interview: Al-Bardawil, 2013). As already explained earlier in this study, the PSC had far more staff and a much greater budget for programmes, including children's and cultural programmes, than the ASC (Interview: Al Shafi, 2013; Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013).

Sesame Street could afford, for example, to send a small child to the all-nations festival in Ramallah, to see tents and exhibits and to meet with people from other cultures and interact with them. *Sesame Street* showed a Syrian market, full of life, with a beautifully dressed man selling locust bean (tamarind) drink, carried on his back, while pouring drinks in a very unique and humorous way (SS17). This way of showing a Syrian market emphasised the richness of the culture, of food and traditions. Yemen was featured in *Sesame Street* in a positive and beautiful way, with a child and mother buying things in a market, showing Yemen as famous for its silver and honey, in addition to praising the Yemeni dress codes and costumes (SS17). Kenya was also presented in *Sesame Street*, as an amazing African country, with footage of a Palestinian child wandering the market, to see the beautiful handmade carvings, wooden masks, drums and other musical instruments and to hear the national Kenyan songs. Later in the same episode (SS17), a Palestinian child got her hair plaited in African style. *Sesame Street* showed a Palestinian boy, Adnan, in Jordan, talking about Al Batra, riding on a horse, going between the rocks and the mountains (SS02). The show presented the city as the centre of trade between East and West and then explained the structure and richness of Al Batra, and its worth in history and heritage. It concluded by inviting children to go to Al Batra and explore it for a day.

In both cultural programmes there seemed to be a deliberate effort not to involve political/factional leaders, governmental officials or

religious figures. As a result, the content maintained a focus on wider traditional, national culture. The explanation for this, according to what the media producers of all four shows told the researcher, is that the overall intention was to defactionalise content. As one interviewee said: 'Factionalism will limit my ability to reach out to new children – we stick to the needs of children and nationalism and show the children as the victims of the occupation' (Interview: Al Bardawil, 2013).

8.11 Factionalism Producing Palestinianism(s)

In conclusion, media content was greatly influenced by this diversity of perspectives from women, to a lesser extent from minorities, and from intellectuals and artists. This study suggests that, were it not for these diverse and varied voices and the way in which they have influenced content, mediated competition between the PSC and the ASC, and diversified the values that were considered appropriate for cultural and children's programming, defactionalisation of content might have been markedly less significant. For example, had the ASC kept a monopoly on discussions about culture within a narrow group of individuals closely affiliated to Hamas's political chief, one can be almost certain that defactionalisation would not have taken place in its children's and cultural programmes, and perhaps, in response, also not in the PSC's programmes.

Producers, presenters and journalists working in both TV outlets seemed quite aware that content was being shaped in such a way that a new form of Palestinianism was being prioritised over former narrow factional agendas that have dominated, for example, much of the news programming in the past. The more diversified voices of the public that have emerged have also made production teams realise that they can contribute to their overall goal of increasing audience by being less factional in their whole approach. During the period of the study, the producers seemed to have realised the importance of Palestinian unity, as for example in *Cultural Flashes* (CF09). The producers showed sympathy with Gaza by displaying photos of war victims, taken by a German photographer. In the same episode (CF09), a discussion followed, on the importance of Palestinian national reconciliation. This suggests that during the period of the study, both stations seemed to practice their own forms of 'Palestinianism,' by searching for values and approaches that united them. This may imply that Palestinianism is simply about

finding a common enemy. However, as this study has tried to show, the emerging new forms of Palestinianism are more than simply a response to a shared threat. Palestinianism is the translation into the media of the sense that Palestinians are engaged in a shared political project, or set of ideals and principles, in spite of the very different circumstances of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.

8.12 Conclusion

Factional structures and processes of defactionalisation can be combined, it seems, and the complex, intertwined normative and political substance of programming, both as processes and content, can follow divergent logics. Factionalisation as a form of securitisation (Hass, 2009) involves a speech act, and should not be conceived as right or wrong, but certainly as something unavoidably political. It can be argued that factionalisation has been largely delegitimised, especially through defactionalisation of media content and production processes. The concept of defactionalised media content is an important one in the Palestinian context, and indeed, in any democratic society, since a media free of factional in-fighting, that can still represent different political trends, can play a significant role in promoting democratic dialogue by fostering free discussion between different political parties and factions around common societal problems. By defactionalising content and bringing in 'voices' that speak to common concerns, contrasting solutions for the problems faced can be more openly debated without automatic resort to rhetorical 'othering' and other forms of factionalising media discourse. This has produced a new form of Palestinianism, which emerged in the media after 2010.

9

Conclusions, Paradoxes, Ways Forward

9.1 Overview of the Main Findings

The central question of this study is about how the PSC and the ASC communicate key themes, including nationalism, resistance, right to education and citizens' rights, within the selected cultural and children's programmes, and whether they did so in a way that served to overcome media 'factionalism'. Children's and cultural programmes were selected because it was hoped, or expected, that in these programmes there would be evidence of defactionalisation. This proved to be the case, when compared with the results of earlier studies of the Palestinian news media. Overall, the analysis of content and the analysis of production both supported the conclusion that renewed forms of nationalism were emerging across ASC and PSC satellite TV content and output during the study period. Several key findings were identified in seeking to explain evidence of defactionalisation of media content and production in all 4 selected TV programmes:

1) The pressure of market forces

The first key finding was that, as formerly factional media producers, still supported financially and politically by particular 'factional' political groupings, producers in ASC and PSC had to compete for market dominance for Palestinian audiences, both at home and abroad. To be able to compete, they had to make some compromises in relation to themes reflecting certain values, and this influenced program content. Their decisions to defactionalise media content were reflected in how selected themes emerged – or did not emerge - in programme content, as analysed. Especially in cultural programmes, but also in children's programmes, there appeared to be an avoidance of factionalism and a move towards forms of what has been termed 'Palestinianism'. The

desire to communicate with international audiences may have played a significant role in fostering defactionalisation of content and this growth – in both ASC and PSC - of a sense of Palestinianism. A different example of the influence of competition on Palestinian satellite media producers was the ASC's following of certain allies as models, specifically Turkey's and Qatar's *Al Jazeera* TV channels (Interview: Abu Jarad, 2013; Al Asfar, 2013). All of this has contributed to enhancing the influence of Palestinian TV channels, and improving quality and defactionalising content.

2) *More relaxed political climate among Palestinian political factions*

A second finding is that a less factional climate in inter-Palestinian politics, in turn influenced production decisions, as reflected in the content of of ASC and PSC children's and cultural programmes during the study period. The analysis in the last few chapters of this thesis, in particular, leads to a more nuanced understanding of the influences that politicians and other major decision-makers have on satellite TV production and content in Palestine. Evidence presented in this study suggests that decisions made locally by both ASC and PSC producers tended to show quite similar use of language and themes reflecting shared values between the two stations, in spite of the persistence of some significant differences, for example in relation to women's presence. Despite their geographical separation, both ASC and PSC, as institutions, closely monitor and follow each other's output, with politicians as keen as producers for each channel to retain and attract audiences. Because technological changes are constantly shifting media environments in which producers have to operate, however, it is not possible to precisely determine the influence of visible political leaders in the process of media production. The ability through social media to rapidly share huge amounts of current information makes it more difficult, not only for governments, but also for political parties, and even for producers, to enact traditionally strict gatekeeper roles that tended in the past to reinforce factionalism.

3) *Technologically-driven changes in production environment*

A third finding is the critical significance of choice among a growing number of satellite channels in Palestine. TV has the ability to produce voice and images, accessible to everyone, including people in prisons,

refugee camps, villages and cities. In Palestine, as elsewhere, all it takes is a TV set and a receiver with dish, all of which can be purchased for under \$200. The owner, usually the man in the house, sometimes the teenagers, use the remote control to travel through a multitude of satellite channels to get the latest updates and programmes, at the push of a button. Unlike satellite TV stations, ground-based (cable) TV stations serve relatively small territories. They are limited to transmitting local and regional programmes only, and, therefore, have a more narrow perspective. Palestinian satellite TV has played a vital role in forming the broader Palestinian public opinion. However, it may be argued that satellite TV media in Palestine, like anywhere else, has also contributed to forms of isolation, leading to the compliance of audiences with hegemonic political projects (Gramsci, 1971), and that the availability of so many channels cannot but influence producers and their agenda setting, whether they are aware of this or not (Strinati, 1995). The participation of audiences can be viewed, from this perspective, as a mostly passive form of participation. In this respect, satellite TV differs from most social media, where the consumer can also be the producer of information (Sienkiewicz, 2012).

As a mass media – in the age of globalisation and technological revolution - satellite TV, alongside social media, can be considered one of the most important means by which public opinion is being formed and informed in Palestine. There have been recent leaps in technological development from UHF TV transmission to satellite channels, now more specialized than ever in news production, education, entertainment, economy, sports, tourism and religion (Al Faqeh, 2011), as well as in cultural and children’s programming, the specific focus of this study. This has tended to increase the diversity and impact of such media communication’s content, both in people’s homes and in public institutions, serving to reduce factional influences that dominated news, for example, in the past (Alshaer, 2012).

4) The dark side of satellite technology: risks and potentialities

A fourth finding concerns the ‘dark’ side of the technological possibilities that may – or may not – be outweighed by something less factional; defactionalised media content. Both the media content analysis in Chapter 6 and 7 and the in-depth analysis of producers’ decisions in Chapters 5 and 8 suggested that the more menacing aspects of TV

technology – its appeal to narrow, locational, religious and ‘factional’ forms of political groupings - have been countered by a tendency towards the removal of factional content, and towards less factional decisions by producers and media professionals. In a strange sense, as the territorial area controlled by the PA in the West Bank and the *de facto* authority of Hamas in Gaza has shrunk, the virtual territory occupied by these satellite TV channels has expanded, to a flourishing environment of up to nine satellite TV channels and tens of local TV channels broadcasting from these tiny strips and pockets of land. The influence of satellite media in Palestine has two aspects: the bright side offered by diversity and defactionalisation, and the dark side resulting more from abuse of such open media to forward narrow and sectarian visions, something termed ‘media factionalism’ in this study. No one can deny that satellite media has great influence, yet the danger lies in what type of perceptions it creates. For example, does satellite media work on developing wider interaction and social connections between all viewing communities, or is it only focused on the narrow connection between medium and audience? This question was asked in relation to children’s and cultural programmes, and it was found, overall, that there was already a move away from marked factionalism in the period 2009-2010. The wider question arose of how to conceptualise these defactionalisation processes, which could tentatively be connected with wider political processes sometimes called desecuritisation (Hass, 2009), remains something that need further research and has not been attempted here. Within the framework of political science, is still an open question as to what defactionalisation might mean in the context of blockaded Palestine, especially in Gaza, where the concept of defactionalisation may prove elusive in the longer term.

Related to this fourth finding is the importance of funding for producers’ choices. Here the observation of French symbolist poet, Stéphane Mallarmé, that even a book can be explosive - in this case also applies to satellite TV as a medium. Since satellite TV has the explosive potential also to misinform audiences, the consequences of producers’ choices can be very real. If those who finance wars also fund media networks and satellite channels, then the future danger of (mis)information being blended with entertainment is very real. Whilst ‘infotainment’ is a popular means to educate, it can also be a means of undermining resistance to injustice, rights violations and military

occupation. During the period of intense factionalism in the Palestinian media, between 2006 and 2008, producers of various factions tried to use all kinds of media to influence the minds of Palestinian people, so as to maintain their own factional support bases, and a highly polarised status quo. They also sought to attract newcomers. All these goals of media production tie in well with the theoretical framework this study has used, which combined the D'Acci circuit of media approach with the Gans and Gitlin focus on content production, adding an acknowledgement of how hegemonic power operates to exercise controls on media producers, in general without the need for overt constraints on 'media freedoms.'

5) A paradox: the role of security apparatuses in shaping content

By providing a lasting common enemy, persistence of Israeli military occupation has contributed to the emergence of new and more diverse forms of media content in Palestinian satellite TV, and a more global audience base than was possible in the past. As was often noted in interviews with producers, these Palestinian satellite TV stations will probably continue to multiply in future, as a means of asserting Palestinians' cultural identity and rights, and as a form of 'virtual Palestinianism'. This expansion of the satellite TV medium signals the desire not to be divided and ruled in future, and to contribute to diverse, yet also unified, forms of national resistance to being collectively 'disappeared.'

Strangely, even content can be shaped positively by the presence of security apparatuses, with better quality production and content in ASC and PSC programmes, but especially in ASC's case, emerging in counter-reaction to the operations of security forces. After all, ASC producers know they are stuck within the narrow confines of the Gaza Strip, under regular heavy bombardment, and they also know that satellite TV is their most effective means of reaching a wider audience. Ironically, though PSC staff members and producers in West Bank have poor, but still relatively better mobility and access to the outside world than those in Gaza, the PSC producers' sense of urgency to get their message out to the wider world may appear less than in the case of ASC, where international audiences seem to play an even more significant role. The desire to communicate with such international audiences is shared, however, between PSC and ASC as a means of supporting the

Palestinian cause, and this internationalisation has tended to indirectly contribute to defactionalising content.

Overall, this study suggests that the relations between any security apparatus and media producers is likely to be a complex one, affecting content in both positive and negative ways, in terms of quality. Occupation can also limit the range of content, preventing first-hand access to many news sources, for example. Yet also demonstrated in the case of cultural programmes, occupation can provide motivation to explore themes in content around resistance, with reference to daily realities on the ground and new audiences and constituencies, including youth and women. Israeli programmes set the standard that Palestinian producers tend to strive for, in order to challenge the monopoly on information. The security apparatuses do influence and restrict programme content in various ways, but this can in turn encourage producers to expand content beyond what would usually be considered age-appropriate for a children's programme. They may explore more openly the relationship between ordinary citizens, especially children, and the intimidation and violence of the occupying security apparatuses.

Responses have difference, since whilst the presence of security apparatuses of Israel can be said to have shaped the entire content of the ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, this is in stark contrast with the near invisibility of the Israeli occupation in *Sesame Street*, already mentioned. The terminology used by the main presenter, Sara, and by puppet Nassur, in *Pioneers of Tomorrow* in episode 15 (PoT15), refers explicitly to the blockade on Gaza, and to war. All this is also explicitly related to the presence of a military occupying power, which controls all land, sea and air routes in and out of Gaza. This makes the content of the programme somewhat revolutionary, when compared with the PSC's programme equivalent.

9.2 Returning to Theory

In Marxist and critical theory, the power of media has been presented in terms of how its message serves the interest of specific groups, political factions or economic interests (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). Going beyond the class-based Marxist insights into media relationships with economic and political power, the Gramscian-influenced notion of 'circuits of media' was introduced in Chapter 2, and suggests that the

desire of producers to communicate political content has become complicated by several issues: by individuals' and group's reception of specific programming content, by moments of distribution and by exhibitions and displays of speech. In applying a Gramscian understanding, we have seen, through a detailed content analysis of four selected Palestinian satellite TV programmes, that there is a hierarchy of decision-making and that media channels tend to operate in ways that aim to maintain their dominance and appeal to audiences.

Equally importantly, and drawing on Gramscian insights, D'Acci provided a manifesto that favours interconnected fields of study. As suggested in the analysis of media production and content in previous chapters, perhaps TV media studies have realigned themselves as a result of their encounter with cultural studies. More studies are considering the ways in which institutional, historical, aesthetic and, most importantly, industrial frameworks, are reproduced. Throughout the discussions and analysis in Chapter 5, and in the deeper analysis in Chapters 6 and 7, this study sought to inform the field of media studies and production about the very specific set of conditions of tension and violent occupation that influenced Palestinian satellite TV, and that are, to some extent, reflected in the content of programmes and structures of production. The study has reflected on the importance of the conglomerate media world that surrounds and includes Palestine. By acknowledging this, and by looking in detail at how the content of children's and cultural TV programmes appears less factional and more collaborative than the political structures would imply, the study suggests that the wider political environment in which Gaza and the West Bank find themselves, and Hamas and Fatah, as divided parts of Palestine, cannot entirely determine media content and production processes.

Factional media can only present factional content when working with grossly over-simplified frameworks and modes of representation. However, when producers make deliberate choices and engineer compromises in order to defactionalise content and production, the whole problem of the factional media becomes more complex and contradictory. This has been obvious on several occasions. For example, in episode 11 of *Burning Brands* (BB11), one of the callers from Oman jumped from talks about the role of the Ministry of Culture in promoting Palestinian culture and literature to a total different topic related to politics, by asking 'when is the Palestinian Authority going to

end the futile negotiations with Israel?’ The presenter, Abu Jarad, smiled and said: ‘It seems that this question is bothering you.’ However, he never tried to answer the question in the show. Instead, he ended the discussion with the caller. This can be explained through the lens of Palestinianism, since media producers have chosen to avoid overt factional discussions or criticism. Instead they have looked for values that might bridge the gaps, yet still keep some of the agendas of their own political parties or factions visible and present.

Defactionalisation in the media emerges wherever differences are consciously or unconsciously evened out for the sake of unity of those who compose the Palestinian ‘imagined community’. Hence, this study demonstrated, in its analysis and discussions, especially in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, that combinations of factors – some ideological, others economic and political – ultimately impacted on how factional media operated in practice. One can debate the distinction between factional media and other forms of less factional media, and this question is valid. Yet since Palestine is still under continuous military and political occupation, and since the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are still divided by military and physical separation, politically, geographically and in terms of security arrangements, it is almost unavoidably the case that two sets of donors of two factions will each tend to push their own agendas, one set through PSC in the West Bank, the other through ASC in Gaza. Though this often appears to be negotiable, the consequences may be that some forms of factional production processes and content are reinforced.

Most of the leadership of Palestinian TV channels seems almost unaware of the significance of cultural values as a theme in content that appeals to Palestinian audiences. This may be an error, as leaders tend to focus on politics and the dominance of changing political situations, rather than cultural dynamics and forms. It seems if the producer is not an intellectual, poet, novelist or writer, then it is seen as a problem. However, if cultural programmes are to be taken seriously, satellite media can contribute, in an important way, to the democratising of telecommunications in society, paying attention to all categories and sectors of that society, and not only the elites. Diverse audiences can potentially be invited in, enlarging the scope for expressing their views and thoughts more openly.

In applying some critical studies and media values frameworks to both children's and cultural programming on ASC and PSC satellite TV, I have suggested that factional media structures are counteracted, perhaps even desecuritized, by the type of production process and content of both children's and cultural programmes of the two stations.

9.3 Defactionalising the Factions?

In terms of the present research, what has been addressed and discussed has been interpreted as a form of defactionalisation, perhaps contributing to a wider culture of reconciliation. Al Bardawil, head of the Board of the ASC (Interview, 2013), has argued that factionalism 'is after all a tool and not a goal.' One of the lessons to be drawn from this analysis of Palestinianism may be that, in order to overcome the polarising legacies of a violent and factional past conflict, in general, new ideas about the nation have to emerge. The desire to communicate with international audiences could play a significant role in fostering the defactionalisation of content and the growth of a sense of Palestinianism.

One of this study's sub-questions concerned the influence of economic and political factors on satellite TV production decisions in the selected programmes, during the period under review. The influence of political leaders remains significant, helping to determine how programme content decisions are made, as revealed during several interviews. However, there is also clearer evidence now, thanks to the interview material along with observations and content analysis, that editorial managers have the final say, for example, in ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow*. The evidence suggests that producers do not coordinate as closely as might be expected with government officials or other party members in making day-to-day decisions (Interview: Al Amriti, 2013). At the same time, the producers of *Burning Brands* are not regulated by the ministry of culture or religious bodies (Interview: Abu Jarad, 2013), but have the station's editorial guidelines that they are required to follow. The guidelines in place tend to match the agenda-setting of each political party, meaning that something 'out-of-the-box' is less likely to get aired.

In any case, each TV channel's General Director observes the content and has the final say over and above the opinion of the heads of programming units. As a TV presenter, Younies is aware that any logistical mistake is not directly his fault. If he does not get the usual

warning, a whisper in his earpiece from the producer, that he is on air again, following a short break, then there can be problems. On one occasion, I observed a short two-minute silence in production, and then the General Director was heard yelling at staff to get things back on air. By that time, he himself was on air! This amusing example shows something serious; that regular media workers in their daily operations are generally on-task, but that the moment they step outside the professional scheme, they know there will be someone to get them back in line. This occurs not only out of concern for the loss of public viewers, but also as a result of complaints from people (e.g., ministers) ranking higher on the organisational ladder than the General Director. Hence, there are several layers of pressure on any producer or presenter, to keep him or her on track. Something similar may apply in terms of the general requirement to keep remarks inside the box and close to the political party or faction's agreed overall 'line' of argument, as described in an earlier section of this chapter.

In other words, political leaders per se are not directly interfering in the production process on a daily basis. However, their presence in overseeing the production process can be sensed if and when things do go wrong; the response can be almost immediate. This was observed in the studios and confirmed in interviews with producers during the fieldwork period in 2013 (Interview: Al Amriti, 2013; Interview: Abu Jarad, 2013). There is clear chain of command, in which the ASC head of programming, Samir Abu Mohsen, is directly involved, with his senior General Director above him. When asked what would happen should a minister see something that did not appeal to him in the TV shows, and what would be the most likely outcome, Abu Mohsen (Interview, 2013) answered that this had never happened, and he offered an example in which phone calls were received from 'outside the studio.' He said that suggestions from 'above' would be taken into consideration, but that his staff members would be under no obligation to follow suit.

There are signs of media defactionalisation in TV programming, but we should be wary of over-generalising. There have been some deliberate choices, for instance, not to favour factional work in children's and cultural programming (Interview: Abu Shammalah, 2013). However, political surroundings do affect the final product; 'Whatever happens in the political surroundings affects the content of our programming – if

there are children who are killed, then we focus on topics related to them' (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013).

At the beginning of the school year, in September, children's programming organises content, so as to meet with the needs of students getting ready for school, to learn, study and be able to focus well on their tasks. Defactionalisation is evident in the situation where, when 'we hear about a creative child that we want to bring to our show, we tend not to ask about his family's political affiliation' (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). In one case, the ASC invited the child of a former Fatah security leader who fled to the West Bank for torturing Hamas members in jail, prior to 2007. ASC producers considered this as a form of compromise. As far as cultural conditions are concerned, it is known that the ASC is Islam-based, but the channel has offered some compromises in *Burning Brands*, as long as those compromises do not clash with 'the media policies of the channel' (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). Such compromises are meant to maintain the dominance of the ASC, by inviting Fatah intellectuals to be part of the shows. The PSC has used similar methods of compromising in cultural programming, though perhaps less so in children's programming, in which there appear to be some rather forced forms of defactionalisation. This is not surprising when it is noted that *Sesame Street* on PSC is Palestine's version of a children's programme that has 'gone global'. Media producers work in accordance with Palestinian culture, but they must adhere to guidelines they cannot avoid.

The decision-making process in ASC's *Pioneers of Tomorrow* starts with the producer coming up with a proposal to the director of programming, in which he or she outlines an idea and indicates how a specific topic will be covered, for example, by interviewing children in summer camps. The producer is questioned as to whether or not the goal is to encourage children to participate in the selection of certain camps over others, and to learn about the benefits of going to summer camps, according to head of ASC programming (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). Abu Mohsen (Interview, 2013) believes that the final say in the decision making process lies with the director of programming, with the general director being given room to comment on a shared document provided by the producer and left open for comments regarding the system. In any case, the general director always has final say on what should be aired or taken out. Abu Mohsen (Interview, 2013) acknowledged that in the children's show *Pioneers of Tomorrow*, some compromises were initiated so as to keep

the attention and interest of child viewers. These included changes in the final product, such as music and sound effects.

In media production units in which there is limited political space for ‘free speech’ and ‘media freedoms,’ most programmers are obliged, for professional reasons, to observe a fairly strict self-censorship. Severe resource constraints historically led to the irregular appearance of print media, especially in Gaza. And the implications of resource constraints can also be seen in the very static form of production in ASC programs in particular. Resources are far less constrained for PSC producers. Yet, the independence and outspokenness of ASC programmes, including of children’s and cultural programmes, is also apparent. Self-censorship is one puzzle discussed further below. It is perhaps more likely when resources are available for producers to experiment with different formats and styles, than when budgets are very tight. Thus, a strict lack of financial resources can not be equated, at least not directly, with a tendency for self-censorship, and deducing from the different views presented in this study, it might be more accurate to suggest that the opposite is true. The relatively generous funding, for example, of *Sesame Street* on PSC, may even have led to more self-censorship than for the much more poorly funded sister program on ASC, *Pioneers of Tomorrow*.

Loyalty can be expressed in different ways. There is loyalty to ‘Palestinian’ national identity, loyalty to the authorities who control the media institutions, and loyalty to the wider population of Palestinians, at home and overseas. Most journalists and producers will feel obliged to show gratitude to their employers and sponsors, and relatively few will ‘bite the hand that feeds.’ This may, at least in part, account for the attraction felt by the ASC and PSC producers for relatively new areas of programme production, such as children’s and cultural programmes, as well as programmes on sports, music and entertainment, in the form of dramas, soap operas and films. All of these are less obviously politicised than, say, programmes about news and current affairs. The risks, with regard to being seen as disloyal, will tend to be far greater in the latter two fields of media production.

So, if they wish to keep their jobs, and their ability to write for a newspaper or produce TV shows, media professionals usually need to place strict guidelines on themselves. This applies also to a collective like a TV channel, in which producers may exercise some protective control

over content, in order to avoid clashes with external regulations. Even though political leaders and decision-makers tend not to interfere directly in and during the TV production process, their feedback is nearly always taken into consideration, but is mostly received after - rather than before - a show is aired (Interview: Abu Mohsen, 2013). However, head of programming Abu Mohsen also said that sometimes particular segments of programmes reflect producers' personal opinions. Since both content and production processes are left to the executive and editorial board to decide on, if a cross phone call comes in during airtime from a minister, the ASC interprets it as an official token of conscientiousness, but does not feel under any obligation to take it into account or suspend the programme.

9.4 Four Puzzles of Media in Palestine: Directions for future research

With regard to the media in Palestine, four puzzles emerged from this study, and each deserves more attention in the future. Each is briefly noted here, in outline:

1. Resource constraints and irregular publication

As in the past with the print media, lack of funding may not be the only – or even the principal – constraint on producers and the quality of programs. As in the past with newspapers, as shown in Chapter 2, they might have a license to publish daily, yet most newspapers especially in Gaza but also in the West Bank, would publish weekly rather than on a daily basis. Limited financial resources were one of the reasons for this, but another may have been the lack of a strong 'communication culture'; something that requires more research. Irregular production is less of a problem in satellite TV programmes, but similarly lack of funding may still not be the main constraint on satellite TV production quality either.

2. Loyalty and self-censorship

None of the major newspapers or other media outlets, such as satellite TV, in Gaza or the West Bank seems willing, or able, to voice significant opposition to the PA, except in times of factional conflict. This is the case, even though there are some private Palestinian TV channels that do challenge the PA and occasionally create controversy. One obvious reason for the Palestinian media's restraint is that there is self-

editorial desks. Yet, both by looking at historical precedents and conducting further research, it may emerge that factionalism in the media cannot be equated with the existence or proliferation of political factions in politics.

3. Factionalism sells

This third puzzle relates to the conflicting pressures on private media outlets in Palestine. The hypothesis is that, occasionally more factionalised media content may be rewarded with larger audiences and more financial support (Hroub and Quneis, 2011). One problem with this suggestion will be that professionalism is not the only priority when deciding on who should be in charge of editorial desks. Yet, both by looking at historical precedents and conducting further research, it may emerge that factionalism in the media cannot be equated with the existence or proliferation of political factions in politics.

4. Exceptionality: Gazan and otherwise

In relation to Gazan exceptionality, what begs for an explanation is the fact that not one of the 32 privately owned TV stations that broadcast, and not one of the three major newspapers presently distributed in Gaza, is able to do so from within Gaza itself. The obvious answer to why this is the case, is that it is because of the Israeli occupation and the restrictions it brings with it. Yet, this discussion will suggest that this may be only part of the reason. A deeper historical understanding shows the distinctiveness of Gazan media (Shehadeh, 1997) and it appears from historical accounts that Gazan exceptionalism long pre-dated even Israeli occupation, as far as the operation and role of the media was concerned.

One can note that, in general, this study, based on selected cultural and children's programmes of ASC and PSC satellite TV, showed how defactionalisation can also be interpreted as akin to 'desecuritisation,' broadly the reverse of 'securitisation' (Buzan, 1993). From this angle, the

defactionalisation of media content and production can reflect, and can also influence, a wider relaxing of political tensions. If defactionalisation can be understood as the reversing of factionalisation, then from the perspective of securitisation theory, defactionalisation can be viewed as a form of ‘desecuritising,’ involving a shift from emergency to ordinary political attention, in search of compromise. When a specific issue is taken (or kept) out of the bubble of emergency politics, of factional security, this can be said to be defactionalisation, akin to desecuritisisation (Aradue, 2004). Securitisation and desecuritisisation are not part of this study, but could prove a useful lens in the future, for looking at how Palestinian satellite TV and other Palestinian media express the tensions between factions. Related to this is the question of how this reinforces a sense of Palestinian identity cutting cuts across physical barriers, and working its way across the sharply divided loyalties to Hamas and Fatah. We now end with proposing a Code of Conduct for the Media in Palestine, as a way forward.

9.5 A Way Forward? Media Codes of Conduct

The draft Palestinian Journalist Code of Conduct focuses on rights, ethics, integrity and respect of copyrights (see Appendix 5). However, there is some ambiguity in the text. For example, Article 7 states that publishing any news or images that contradict ‘the morals of the Palestinian people’ must be avoided. Of course, moral standards can be relative to the varying political, cultural and moral beliefs associated with specific satellite media outlets. The PSC may view belly dancing as culturally educational in a broad, global way, but the ASC may consider it inappropriate and against the morals of Palestinian people. In any case, satellite media is in violation of the code of conduct of the Palestinian Journalist Syndicate – whether with voice, image or video.

Political divisions and the absence of laws and jurisdictions constitute an extra burden on the media crews because they are not sure who to turn to for legal and professional support. Professional, logistical, political, ideological, social, cultural and economic pressures cannot be ignored in assessing the performance of media crews or the validity of the Palestinian code of journalistic ethics. Naturally, when both the Hamas syndicate and the Fatah syndicate claim legality, without elections, this reflects that both sides are able to engage in violations of human rights with impunity. They are not seriously questioned. After all,

both establishments are protected by two different political systems that control Gaza on the one hand, and the West Bank on the other. All these pressures impact media behaviour and the attitude of media professionals in carrying out their work.

Media ethics have arguably generated more attention in Palestine than in some European countries where freedom of the press is assumed to exist, and where media outlets have wide audiences and some authority. In Palestine, there has always been a need for media integrity and ethical values among media professionals. It has become even more important since the conflict between Hamas and Fatah erupted in 2008-9, to ensure that ethics play an important role in ensuring that media outlets conduct their work in a professional manner. It is apparent that a lack of media ethics may open doors to corruption within the media profession, and this in turn can run the risk of the loss of trust and diminishing audiences of viewers (Khalaf, 2008).

The relatively new phenomenon of satellite media has played a vital role in developing the media profession in Palestine, and has reinforced the need for a code of ethics. Although most editing crews are aware of the seriousness of proper conduct, and discussion of media ethics has been considerable, serious actions have been few, and even in the best of situations, existing codes of conduct and ethics within international media may not be implemented (Al-Omari, 2010). In Palestine in recent years, media ethics have been subordinated to pragmatic realities. Many media professionals, including many media producers, passively wait for instructions from their political elites and funders before going to print or on air. This practice reveals the need to push even harder for generalised media ethics, unrelated to factional ideology, including in children's and cultural programming. And where media content is less factionalised, there may be more space for ethical journalistic standards to influence common practices. Media ethics have become a menu of varying dishes, depending on which political group or governmental official governs the choices made. Instead, such codes should be a universal recipe designed for all. Of course, in reality, a journalistic code of ethics will always be open to manipulation.

Another aspect generating media corruption arises from ignorance of rules or a lack of rules. This is explained as resulting from a state of constant unrest that condemns people to live under the threat of

persistent attack. Therefore, long range planning gives way to living for the day. Unrest and perpetual chaos produces an absence of laws and regulations in the governance of most satellite TV stations in Palestine. One may argue that unintended ignorance of such codes removes the blame from the shoulders of media producers. However, it should be the obligation of media producers to remain aware of the codes within their profession.

To be fair, although there are relatively few resources in Arabic dealing with media ethics, such codes and provisions are plentiful and accessible in many other languages. There is also a shortage of specialised media journals dealing with media ethics, apart from some working papers and lectures presented in workshops. There is a need for more specialised media journals to deal with media ethics, especially in Palestine and the wider Arab region. The lack of such material is ironic, given the historical role Palestinians have played in the history of media in the region, including in the print media, which was staffed by intellectuals, thinkers and practitioners, who carried the struggle of their own community, making their works pioneering for later liberation and development initiatives.

Indeed, the value of codes of ethics or legislation related to journalistic practices, especially in countries controlled by authoritarian regimes, may be that it stresses the worth for the general public of having access to full information about what is taking place. Even public health and the well-being of citizens are said to depend on a relatively free and ethical media, one of the better-known requirements of human development. To remove all 'major sources of unfreedom, poverty as well as tyranny, power-economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states,' is outlined in Sen's *Development as Freedom* as vital for human development (1999:526). Expressing their point of view publicly, even if they are critical of those in power, is a fundamental duty of journalists under many of such codes of conduct. The suppression of the right to freedom of expression leads to the presentation of narratives that may not be recognisable given the life situations actually experienced by most of the population. The basic principles found in most journalism codes of conduct, include independence and integrity of the profession; respect for truth, or

objectivity; integrity in data collection and respect for individuals. These are now considered one by one, and conclude this chapter.

Independence and professional integrity

It often happens that media professionals receive tempting offers or gifts from elites, with the aim of establishing a relationship of patronage, in which the patron offers information that the journalist then reports, without necessarily checking its source or veracity. Rather as with the entertaining of businessmen with golf, sex workers and fancy restaurants (Laitila, 1995), the patron will be able to provide income as well as gifts that prove difficult to resist for the hard-up media professional. He or she may gradually abandon his or her professional integrity or willingness to check all facts, as perks, gifts, and privileged information are leaked. This can mean that a comfortable patronage relationship is established. Within a very insecure, high-risk media environment, this will prove attractive, and even essential for some media personnel's survival. The Palestinian Code of Ethics, however, warns that it is vital 'to not abuse the profession by illegally obtaining personal privileges of any type, whether material or moral' (Article 8: Code of Ethics: Palestinian Journalist Syndicate).

As elsewhere in the world, Palestinian media professionals do establish ties with companies that ask the media to promote their business, and include some products and services through placement in the press and in programme content. Thus, media professionals presenting or producing TV shows may enjoy perks like travel provided by private executive jets belonging to elites including business people as well as political leaders. Such generosity often comes at a price, and by accepting perks, media professionals come to be viewed, and come to behave, as if they were simply part of the PR team of local political and economic elites. In the case of the media in Palestine, from the start in the early twentieth century, reporters were rarely professional trained, and the wages and extra benefits they earned were generally dependent on a show of loyalty. Open criticism would mean their financial and other forms of benefits would be directly at risk. There were relatively few exceptions to this rule, and those were mostly Palestinian journalists and media professionals working for media outlets based outside Palestine.

Respect for truth

Integrity in dealing with issues is inseparable from respect for truth. Upholding truth and integrity means that media professionals, or a film crew making a programme for satellite TV, for example, do not deceive the public by inserting political propaganda in the middle of programme content, or providing only one side of a debate, ignoring other experts with different views. Respect for the principles of truth means that the deliberate misinterpretation of documents and facts, for instance by selective quotation editing and misrepresentation, should be avoided. Practices that undermine respect for truth include the amplifying of irrelevant events and minimising or ignoring important public issues. Yet, this is not only a problem in Palestine, but for the entire, global media, where news of plastic surgery can displace articles about major disasters, genocide or war and massive political change, from the front page or from the news broadcast. Where Palestinian media tended to use the power of political parties to publish anything to name and shame individuals, even if there was no evidence of any wrongdoing, the code of ethics restricted such journalistic practices by stating:

‘To respect private freedoms and not take photographs or record people without their permission, in case that should conflict with the public interest, unless in the following fields such as revealing crimes against, or damages to public health, or threats to national and regional security’ (Article 20: Code of Ethics: Palestinian Journalist Syndicate).

Within factional media, as Chapter 2 already hinted to, content mostly focuses on the political ideas of individual or factional owners. At times, this is viewed as the norm, so that within the context of Palestine, the use of media platforms for political agendas is sometimes viewed as quite justified, especially in the absence of relevant legislation that protects the integrity and critical role of media professionals.

Standards for data collection; respecting information rights

In researching materials for an article or programme, a journalist or researcher is supposed to abide by ethics that prevent the journalist from unintentionally violating the rights of others. Honesty requires that sources should not be ignored when they are available, and that knowingly presenting false representations should be avoided. In the Palestinian media, as elsewhere, information gathered is often based on

information from unverified or confidential sources who wish to remain anonymous. Sometimes, there may be no realistic way to know how reliable such information is, without exposing the individual source. This is a common dilemma for all journalists worldwide. It is acute in relation to Palestinian satellite TV, since both Fatah and Hamas factions are rarely able to meet face to face, making it difficult for the journalist to verify the facts other than with the faction to which he or she 'belongs'.

In satellite media, as in all other media, sources and resources are important, including the duty of media professionals to correctly attribute referenced texts and work to their original authors and owners. Of course, in some cases, media does have the right to withhold sources to protect the safety or privacy of others. However in the Palestinian media, there is a tendency not to respect the ideas and thoughts presented by others as a matter of principle. Even in the well-funded PSC *Sesame Street*, there is no information about who writes the dialogue, or makes the puppets. Yet even the puppets of *Sesame Street* do not have immunity from integrity and from the code of ethics! Children's programmes may suffer from lower ethics-standard ratings because of the lack of thoroughness regarding the sourcing of information, resources, text and dialogue.

Respect for individuals, and avoidance of discrimination

Humiliation of others should also not be permitted by journalists, who should respect the right to privacy and the desire for human dignity. This includes unjustified accusations against political opponents, and slur campaigns alleging personal failings without the necessary evidence. In some Palestinian TV media, discrimination is in evidence, not so much with regard to religion, as in connection with political affiliation and/or gender. There are also 'ethnic' forms of discrimination that undermine and negatively label specific groups, such as rural Bedouins. By invading people's privacy, under the cover of the 'authority' of political factions, means the media sometimes enters the lives and homes of people in ways that may undermine personal dignity. The Palestinian code of ethics states that a journalist should 'completely commit to not publishing anything which might cause incitement, encourage discrimination based on race, origin, colour or skin, religion, sex, profession, physical and psychological disability. These topics are not to be mentioned, unless objectively related to the published topic' (Article

24: Code of Ethics: Palestinian Journalist Syndicate). In practice, for example, a family that lives in a refugee camp will find it difficult to object to the media entering their home and filming, a clear invasion of their right to privacy. This is because any objection from the family can result in being punished through withdrawal of food rations, generally provided with oversight from specific political factions in power.

To sum up, there is significant evidence in the history of the Palestinian media that media ethics, whether from an individual or societal perspective, have been relatively neglected as a field of study. Most scholarly and historical studies of the media in Palestine have avoided bringing up sensitive ethical questions around the political and social role of mass media. However, there have been some studies on changing styles of expression and writing in the printed press, and some more recent studies on the media in relation to nationalism, reconciliation, and resistance to occupation (Abuzanouna, 2012; Thawabteh, 2010; Khalaf, 2008).

A question that arises is how media producers and journalists in Palestine could adhere to these codes of ethics, given the constraints and challenges they face on a daily basis. Some would argue that the presence of a strong ethical sensibility in Palestinian media production derives from Islamic thinking. Journalistic integrity is considered to be a religious as well as a professional obligation. This much is evident from the wording of the code of ethics in Palestine, which opens with: 'I swear in the name of Allah.'

Media ethics have played a large role in debates over the past years, particularly after the 2007 Fatah-Hamas conflict. Different media outlets faced accusations of fanning the flames of factional political violence and reinforcing political polarisation. The Palestinian media, as a whole, began assessing its own ethics. Institutes and international organisations working within Palestine have offered workshops, training and awareness campaigns that have helped to focus more attention on the necessity of media reform.

When it comes to satisfying donors and avoiding topics that are too overtly contentious, media producers in Gaza suffer from forms of pressure that are similar to those felt in the West Bank. These pressures are closely connected to the restrictive political environment, and to the

way in which such restrictions increase with ideological pressure, for example in a situation of political factionalism and polarisation between factions. The hope in this study has been to expose, through the specific example of children's and cultural programmes, how television networks can help reduce rather than reinforcing factionalism, and can also make hitherto 'invisible' Palestinians more visible. As the study also reveals, although producers and audiences may continue to appear as 'caged political animals', this study shows they still have alternatives about how to represent their cultural realities under occupation (Bishara, 2012:188).

Appendix 2***Questions Asked by Researcher to Producers during Fieldwork***

1. Can you tell us about the idea of the programme? And what is the content that you have included?
2. What are the aims you hope to achieve with the programme?
3. Can you tell how popular the programme is? And any local or regional reactions to the programme?
4. How long does it take you to prepare and produce an episode?
5. How is the direction of the flow of information to you influenced, and what chain of command is applied in order to produce each show?
6. Who are your main creators/producers and how do they work and interact with each other?
7. How would you describe the relationship between the producer and the ministry of information and media?
8. Prior to a show airing, who reviews it? And, after the show has been aired, are there any further reviews or analyses of it?
9. What is the minimum level of professional training and experience required to be a producer and does it include a college degree in journalism or media? And do they bring in external assistants to help them film, shoot and edit?
10. What budget is allocated to the show, and how has it changed since the programme first aired?
11. If the budget has changed, what circumstances lead to this change?
12. In terms of equipment, do you have everything you need, or are you lacking in items that would improve the programme?
13. Do travel restrictions have any impact on your production, and if so, how would you describe that impact?
14. Are there any reviews or interventions by religious authorities involved in producing the show?
15. Would you please describe the process of casting the show? And are there any challenges to casting or the selection of guests in the case of cultural programmes like Cultural Flashes and Burning Brands?

16. Do you pay any attention to how Israel and Egypt monitor their children's programming and if so, how does it affect your own production here?
17. In 2006, the ASC was criticised for producing anti-Semitic children's programming, whilst the PSC was seen as too soft on Israel and its representation of the reality of the occupation. Has this criticism impacted the way you produce children's programming?
18. Does the station coordinate with other institutions that work to improve citizens' rights and democratisation?
19. When producing the show, what is the national target you are focused on? In other words, what is the audience that you aim at? And, when you refer to Palestine, how do you physically, geographically, interpret that? Is it the West Bank and Gaza? Is it Israel, West Bank and Gaza, and does it involve Palestinians in the diaspora?
20. If you could change anything about the process and content of your production, what would it be, and why?
21. Can you give me some insights into if and how the content has been influenced by the following factors?

Content is influenced by media workers' socialisation and attitudes

Content is influenced by media organisation and routines

Content reflects social reality with no distortion

Content is influenced by other social institutions and forces

Content is influenced by ideological positions to maintain the status quo

Appendix 3 **Operational Definitions of Key Themes and Other Terms**

This document highlights the values and vocabularies used in the content analysis, in an attempt to provide a precise definition, to accompany the process of analysis as a guide to comprehending the meanings of each value or concept, compatible with Palestinian perspectives. Category values are organised in the same form as approved by supervisory teams in The Hague and Rotterdam, and have been checked by regional supervisors.

Key theme: a set of classified categories, which the researcher has prepared in accordance with the content of selected TV programmes, and including the aim of the analysis. Value categories are used in analysing with the best academically valid and comprehensive method, in order to facilitate extracting results from the study materials in a manageable way. The study has adopted a number of key themes, which are stated in the content analysis form.

Nationalism and national discourse: refers to ideas based on common national values positively promoted by Palestinians. National interests focus on Palestinian heritage, traditions and identity of Palestinians, as well as on anything that is connected to the collective nation (Palestine), such as trade, products or services, e.g., Palestinian *zatar* (thyme) and *tatreez* (embroidery). The theme also includes values that focus on the individual identity, the meaning of belonging to Palestine, including a sense of consciousness of patriotism and devotion to one's country for the defence of National Movement interests.

Citizens' rights and obligations: values that promote people's right to express themselves through economic and social rights, including the right to organise, the right of access to clean water, the right to healthy food and safe shelter, the right to receive education and the right to peacefully move around freely in a dignified life. Obligations to respect the laws and communal norms fall heaviest on state public servants, but, nonetheless, apply to all individuals.

Religious values: refers to values that focus on Palestinian observance of Christianity and Islam, including religious holidays, calendar events and observances (Eid al Fitr, Eid al Adha, Christmas, Easter, Prophet Mohammed day etc.), teaching children historical religious values such as

the meaning of fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, citing the Quran and Prophet Mohammed's own inspirations, observing Omrah, Hajj, Al Qader (The Night of Power), which is the holiest night at the conclusion of Ramadan. Religious values also refer to attitudes toward what differentiates a good or unacceptable practice of Islam, preparation rituals for and practice of prayers, blessings and greetings in Islam vs. Christianity, e.g., *Al Salam alaykum* (Peace be upon you) vs. Marhaba (Hello). Religious values also encompass ideas about spirituality, faith, and the purpose of life.

Resistance and resistance literature: refers to all values dealing with resisting and defending the self and family from Israel's military occupation. Resistance includes peaceful resistance, armed resistance, and economic boycott (which is a form of peaceful resistance,) as well as Palestinian resistance (called *Muqawama*) to the copious restrictions that Israel applies to everyday life. Resistance is grounded in the concept of not giving in to injustices imposed on Palestinians. Naming and including mention of all Palestinian villages and cites occupied by Israel, such as Jerusalem, Jaffa, Akko, Al Majdal, Safad, Yebna and Beit Daras, is a form of resistance. I include reference to the visual symbol (*mujtab al awda*), the key of return, which is part of the resistance message that refers to the Palestinians' right to return to their homes.

Social values: includes all values focusing on positive social concepts such as friendship, loyalty, parsimony, family structure, neighbour relations and customs, pride and self-esteem, cooperation, love, division of labour, reciprocity and courage, as well as attitudes toward the negative aspects of deceit, theft and corruption.

Cultural values: all aspects of cultural production and ideals that make up the whole of Palestinian history, culture, tradition, symbolism, and every day norms for cultural attire (male and female,) recognition and meaning of traditional symbolism and traditional arts and crafts, including Palestinian intellectual figures and artists, novelists and poets.

Political values: includes all values and topics focusing on political rights, refugees, prisoners, indefinite detentions, siege, Intifada, Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, Jewish-only settlements and outposts and segregationist construction, Palestinian factions, Palestinian division, Palestinian-Palestinian relations, Fatah, Qassam Brigades, Hamas, house demolitions, arrests, torture, tanks, drones, jets, road-blocks and restrictions.

Educational values: includes all values focusing on pre-school education in basic math and writing numbers, language (classical and colloquial Arabic) skills, peer-group relations and social behaviour, up to higher education in scientific, historical, geographic, foreign-language skills, problem solving skills, self respect, negotiation skills, debate and critical thinking skills.

Entertainment and fun: refers to all values associated with providing an enjoyable atmosphere of entertainment and relaxation for children, including games, crossword puzzles, books, vocabulary games, stories, and play with toys, live animals and pets.

Methods used: refers to the methods, which TV stations use to bring media materials to the audience, to achieve their goals. Such methods are divided into three different categories: discussion, analysis or opinion.

Discussion: refers to questions arising around specific values; discussion of solutions to problems and implementation of solutions.

Analysis: a style, which TV uses to present specific political, social, cultural or intellectual values through analysis of both positive and negative aspects, indicating what result can be achieved through this analytical approach for each specific value.

Opinion: a TV station adopts a specific point of view that the audience should take for granted.

Position: This category shows whether there is positive support, neutrality or negative opposition toward particular material content under analysis. Determining which of those positions is adopted, is indicated in the content provided. For example:

Positive Support: producers of media outlets focus their direction in support of specific ideas, for example fasting during the Ramadan month is considered positive.

Neutrality: occurs when producers don't adopt a position but remain neutral to the context, or when they show both positive and negative positions on specific values.

Oppositionist: when media outlet producers focus their direction on disagreeing with specific ideas. For example, aggressive behavior in the classroom is seen as negative.

Secondary materials: all materials used as supportive resources in TV children's programming and cultural TV. This includes photographs, videos, cartoons, Quranic verses, hadith sayings and proverbs.

Photos: all types of still images used for illustration.

Videos: film footage, including reports from outside studios.

Cartoons: all forms of two-dimensional illustrations of visual art, mostly fictional or semi-fictional drawings.

Quranic verses: suras (passages) and proverbs mentioned in the Holy Islamic Book (The Qur'an), which Muslims believe to be the verbatim word of Allah passed to Prophet Mohammed through the angel Gabriel.

Hadith sayings: all saying or acts ascribed to the Prophet Mohammed, which do not appear in the Qur'an, but are attributed to him by accepted sources, and have been collected as 'hadith.'

Proverbs: all sayings that express a truth that is based on common sense, courtesy or the practical experience of human beings. Proverbs can be translated from other languages and cultures, or be considered as merely national.

Others: refers to all other secondary materials that are not mentioned above.

Length of episode: how much actual airtime is given to the TV programmes, including breaks.

30 minutes: refers to all TV programmes of around 30 minutes.

45 minutes: refers to all TV programmes of around 45 minutes.

60 minutes: refers to all TV programmes of around 60 minutes.

Other: refers to all airtime that does not fall around any of the above mentioned.

Disruption in episode: refers to all situations in which a show stops while playing in its network-allocated time slot. Such disruption could be for various reasons, including: commercial advertisement, call for prayers, regular breaks and TV station breaks.

Call for prayers: refers to the interruption during TV programming to announce the times of Islam's five daily prayers.

Commercial advertisement: refers to interruption during the broadcasts by advertisements of commercial products or services.

Regular breaks: refers to the usual breaks, which come in between programmes or during episodes, as, for example, breaks for news briefs.

TV station breaks: these are standard TV breaks, which distinguish a TV station from other TV stations.

Who is the Participant: focuses on the guest participants taking part in the episode, either in the studio (either recorded or broadcast live by satellite, by phone, or via sms.) or outside the studio.

Experts/specialists: refers to experts on the topic of discussion. For example, a discussion of the literature of resistance requires a professor who teaches this specific form of literature, or a pioneering poet who writes on the topic. It is assumed that an expert is aware of most aspects associated with the topic, and, therefore, is invited as an expert/specialist.

Regular observers: refers to any observer on any specific issue, meaning specialists and non-specialists on the topic of choice.

Factional officials and Government representatives: refers to all individuals participating in their capacity as factional leaders or spokespersons of factional parties (Fatah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad or any other Palestinian political faction,) government officials of both the Palestinian Authority in West Bank and the *de facto* government of the Gaza Strip. Factional and government officials merge as participants, as it could be that a faction leader is also a government official. For instance, a minister of education may also be a factional leader.

NGO workers: refers to all spokespersons or staff members of non-governmental organisations who are invited to comment on issues raised in the episodes.

Religious figures: refers to any figure holding religious status, either Christian, Muslim or Jew, invited as a guest or referred to in the episode.

Average citizens: refers to all citizens; any random national on the street, who speaks within his/her own personal capacity and experience.

Male: refers to an adult male person, who is not a child.

Female: refers to adult female person, who is not a child.

Child: anyone, male or female, below the age of 18 years.

Forms of participation: refers to those taking part in the internal or external content and input of an episode. This form of participation includes all contributions to overall discussion, whether in the studio, or by phone, sms, social media, or pre-recorded interviews.

Phone/sms: refers to all forms of participation through phone calls and short messages from cell phones (either from within Palestine or from abroad.) Such contributions are usually read aloud by the presenter of the programme, or appear in the lower part of the screen as text.

E-mail: from all participants communicating through e-mail, either inside Palestine or from abroad.

Studio: refers to any form of participation, usually live, that happens inside the studio of either of the two TV stations.

Pre-recorded interviews: are all those interviews that are part of an episode, and that are not broadcast live, but recorded in the form of a reportage prior to the airing of the episode.

Function of participation: means the purpose of the participation, and what it contributes to the production of the content, i.e., does the participation enhance clarification of specific issues, such as supplying correct information, discussing solutions, presenting points of view, sharing personal experience, contributing to child education, entertainment and fun.

Clarification: refers to all forms of participation or interpretation that remove obstacles to understanding a specific issue (e.g., clarifying a verse of the Qur'an or the texts of Prophet Mohammed's Hadith inspirations.)

Correction of information: refers to any form of participation that is meant to correct error or inaccuracy in specific practices or rituals (e.g., clarifying information on correct order for washing body before prayer.)

Discuss solutions: refers to any attempt that is meant to bring various solutions for one problem (e.g., in conflict resolution in personal life, for example in classrooms and between peers, and collective conflict resolution, as in political conflict.)

Present points of view: all attempts by participants to share their opinions on specific issues (e.g. all conditional US funding must stop.)

Share personal experience: refers to all situations in which participants share their own personal experience of something that happened, or the personal experience of someone else, in order to help others (e.g., sharing personal stories of fear in the darkness or sharing the poetry of a prisoner still detained.)

Child education: refers to all situations in which the participants use their experience and skills to teach children new skills.

Entertainment and fun: an idea, task or puzzle, intended to provide amusement or enjoyment. This may be in the form of a performance, activity, music, drama or dance, anything most likely to draw attention and create a fun atmosphere of information.

Appendix 4**Supplementary list of newspapers published in Palestine**

- *Al Sabah* (The Morning) originally published in Gaza from 1995 under Mohammed Al Qedwa. Funded by the PA, receiving \$25,000 annually, mainly carrying opinions of Political and National Guidance Committee, part of the PA.
- *Al Dar* (The House) established in 2003 by Hassan Al Kashef, former PA official, he later worked as a reporter for the French radio. Viewed as an independent newspaper and gained wide support for in-depth coverage of Palestinian affairs.
- *Al Resala* (The Message) first published in 1997 as a Hamas newspaper and a vehicle for Al Khalas National Islamic Party. The newspaper aims to strengthen values and promote Palestinian traditions by fighting all types of corruption and intellectual invasions. For many years, Hamas has resisted any normalisation with the Israeli occupier and *Al Resala* is known as the foundation stone of Hamas media. It contains social and intellectual coverage of issues. Its publication and distribution is limited to Gaza because Israel will not allow its distribution in the West Bank.
- *Al Istiqlal* (The Independence) started in Gaza, and received a license from President Arafat in 1994. Known for close ties with Islamic Jihad faction and therefore shut down on various occasions, and members of its staff either arrested or attacked. Identified itself as a resistance – and not an opposition – newspaper.
- *Al Karama* (The Dignity) established in 1995 by Dr Diab Allouh (current Palestinian Ambassador to China.) Speaks on behalf of the Fatah movement and is popular among security forces and Fatah loyalists.
- *Sawt Al Watan* (Nation Voice) was published in Cyprus in 1989 as a social-cultural magazine by two active members of the Palestinian People's Party. The newspaper stopped printing temporarily, and re-emerged in 1995 as a voice for the Communist agenda, which is dedicated to supporting Palestinian workers' rights.
- *Al Sada'a* (Happiness), established in 2002, is a social magazine that reflects an Islamic perspective. It focuses mainly on issues related to Palestinian families and women and children's education. The magazine

attempts to address theoretical Islamic traditions and replace them with ones that are more practical.

Appendix 5
Palestinian Media Code of Conduct

The following is the translation from Arabic language by the researcher.
Palestinian Journalist Syndicate

We hold as a belief, the role that national journalism has played across the stages of the struggle of the Palestinian people, in expressing their hopes and sharing in their pain and as a support to its great movement for national liberation and emancipation from all forms of exploitation and oppression. We consider the importance of journalism in participating in the process of national construction, and its ability to deliver its eternal message, in protecting the domestic, national and civilization capabilities and achievements. This reflects the importance and gravity of the responsibility which journalism holds by being a true mirror for the views, hopes, pains and culture of the Palestinian society, as a tool of guidance, mobilization and leadership, in serving the structure of the foundation principles and values which have been enshrined by the Palestinian people through the long struggle, in addition to the leading role of journalism on the cultural, media and development fronts. Departing from the fact that journalism should remain a strategic weapon in the hands of people and for the sake of the freedom of homeland and the citizens, as well as a fence that protects rights and private and public freedoms, through social solidarity which achieves journalistic freedom, such freedom should be a natural, sacred extension of the freedom of the people.

We, the Palestinian Journalists, declare the following: Journalism does not only derive its conduct from its quality, but from the honour of the goal which is served by the published word and image. Furthermore, the honour of commitment to journalistic work is not complete, unless it is elected independent from all sources of custody, censorship, directing, containment and deviance. Thus, the independency of journalism in its role and from the perspective of social responsibility, for the sake of people under censorship, is only the first condition for noble and responsible journalism.

Apart from this perception and loyalty of journalists, to the blood of the noble martyrs, the sacrifices of our people and their aspirations for a

shining future, all must meet their responsibilities, which hold the journalist in his apparent behaviour, and practice of the principles of code of conduct, honesty, transparency, creditability, ethics and traditions of the profession.

We undertake and declare:

1. To completely commit to general Palestinian laws, including the documented Declaration of Independence, issued in 1988 in Algeria, the Palestinian Publications and Publishing Law, international norms and charters, which rely on the structure of principles accumulated from the active participation in intellectual development and cultural heritage of the Palestinian people.
2. To commit to defending the freedom of press, as an emphasis on the right of public to be aware of facts and express their views freely, guided by the principle that the right to knowledge is a basic human right.
3. To completely commit to obtaining information and facts through legal ways, and to transferring them to the public with creditability and honesty, in order to protect journalism from any type of deviation from the code of conduct and from harming national interests.
4. To commit to avoiding publishing unreliable information or distorting reliable information, or attributing statements or practices to a person or a group without verifying its source.
5. To completely commit to supporting judicial justice, independency and sovereignty, in publishing information on open investigations, ongoing trials, and to not taking sides against accused persons in a criminal prosecution, or litigants in civil prosecutions, holding no prejudice toward the right of the press to cover events from the public view.
6. To commit to not publishing names, or photographs, of accused people, or those brought to trial, for the sake of their privacy, their future, and to facilitating their reformation and return to their community.
7. To commit to avoiding publishing any news, or images, which contradict the morals of the Palestinian people.
8. To commit to not abusing the profession by illegally obtaining personal privileges of any type, whether material or moral.
9. To commit to publishing the correction of news that has been previously published, without violating the rights of the journalist.

10. To completely commit to objectivity in all that we write and publish, and, specifically, to remaining objective in any criticism related to public figures.

11. To completely commit to all published advertisements being in accordance to the general principles and values of the society and the message of the media, and being consistent with this code of ethics document.

12. To professionally and morally commit to separating journalism work from advertisement and to not dedicating our work to favouring advertisements.

13. To commit, when publishing advertisements of foreign bodies, to making sure that they are in accordance with the national interests, regardless of the advertisements being for direct or indirect aid from donor countries and organisations.

14. To commit to differentiating between editorial journalism material, and local or foreign advertisements, with the intention to protect the reader from misleading description.

15. To commit to limiting and organising the publishing of advertisements in newspapers and in the mass media in which we are working, in accordance with the needs and circumstances of the Palestinian society, which is struggling for national liberation, and to ending economic exploitation and monopolism, regardless of its source.

16. To completely commit to respecting the copyright of authors and writers of work we publish and to being aware that when we quote other sources, we must refer to those sources.

17. To completely commit to journalistic integrity and to maintaining the privacy of the profession by rejecting any type of pressure to abort such privacy. Alongside the confidentiality required of journalists are the secrets of the profession. Revealing such secrets of the profession is not permitted, because they are protected by the rule of law.

18. To completely commit to not making any statements or practicing any acts which may prejudice the status of the journalist within the organisation for which he/she is working; including professional, functional or living conditions, with the exception of cases violating the law or conflicting with this code of ethics document.

19. To completely commit to not dealing with or working for any journalistic or media organisation that has illegally fired a journalist, before guaranteeing his/her full rights in accordance with the written document by

the syndicate of journalists, as a frame reference to the freedom, dignity and rights of journalists and members.

20. To commit to respecting private freedoms and to not taking photographs of or recording people without their permission, in case such would conflict with the public interest, unless in the following fields: revealing crimes against persons and property, or damages to public health, or threats to national and regional security.

21. To commit to recognising the right of the journalist to express views, regardless of the difference in intellectual and political interpretations, as long as this expression is in accordance with the law and national interests.

22. To completely commit to laying out all available facts, information and data to the public, to emphasise the right of the masses to know fact and be aware of it.

23. To commit to not publishing the names, photographs, or personal details of mentally ill or drug/alcohol addicts or those who donate their body parts, without their agreement or the permission of their families, unless there is a general interest served by publishing, in an appropriate form.

24. To completely commit to not publishing anything, which might cause incitement, encourage discrimination based on race, origin, colour of skin, religion, sex, profession, physical and psychological disability, and to not mentioning such topics unless they are objectively related to the published topic.

25. To completely commit to not working in additional professions, which might distort the message of journalism, create fear or appear to the public as a conflict of interests, or exploitation of interests of the public.

26. To commit to not publishing news reports, or articles, from any form of media, which are already in the name of another journalist, and to not deliberately changing the content of such reports or articles without prior permission from the journalist.

27. To commit to acknowledging that journalists who are proved to be violating the code of ethics of journalism should be fired from their work as well have their membership of the syndicate revoked.

28. To completely commit to solving problems and professional arguments occurring between journalists themselves, through the council of the syndicate or any other party authorised by the syndicate to solve that problem.

29. To commit to, in cases of personal sadness or trauma, not asking questions perceived as lacking tact, consideration, empathy or consideration for feelings.

30. To completely commit to not conducting interviews with, or taking photographs of, children in situations of psychic distress, if such interviews or photographs would reflect negatively on the child, or other children, especially in cases of humiliation, or of sexual crimes, regardless of whether the children are victims, crime suspects or eyewitnesses.

31. To commit to not abusing the position of journalist directly or indirectly to gain personal benefits contradictory to the ethics of the profession.

32. To completely commit to not abusing, or misleading, trainee journalists into doing any work outside of the framework of the profession, and to providing them with appropriate training, in accordance with the rules of the profession, and to offering them compensations for the work they do.

33. To completely commit to not providing foreign press and media organisations with any information, or journalistic material, whether oral, written or video-taped, which could harm national security, or national characters.

34. To commit to giving priority of work and cooperation to Palestinian journalists and Palestinian press and media organisations in conducting any work or service in the field of the profession.

35. To completely commit to being in solidarity and empathy with colleagues for the sake of protecting and maintaining the dignity of the journalist and the ethics of the profession, according to the needs and as the Syndicate sees fit.

36. To completely commit to using Palestinian and Arabic idioms and vocabularies for historical, cultural, geographic and political names in journalistic work in a manner that serves the national and regional interests.

37. To commit to dealing with all Arab journalists, within the same professional and functional criteria and measures, in the same way as in dealing with Palestinian journalists. We the Palestinian journalists swear by Almighty Allah to be the most loyal trustees, in our absolute and complete commitment to all the articles in this code of journalistic ethics, on the basis of national and domestic responsibility, and in accordance with the principles of respect and fair competition for the sake of general interest, and to adhere to the Arab media code of ethics, Arab solidarity code of

conduct, and the code of conduct of the Union of Arab Journalists. On the basis of what we have declared, God is our witness.

Appendix 6
Frequency Tables All Programmes
(rounded to the nearest 0.5 per cent)

Table 1 (Also Table 3.1) Themes

Category		Yes	No
Nationalism and National Discourse	Frequency	11	77
	Percent	12.5	87.5
Religious values	Frequency	7	81
	Percent	8.0	92.0
Citizens Rights and Obligations	Frequency	-	88
	Percent	-	100
Resistance and Resistance Literature	Frequency	9	79
	Percent	10	90
Social values	Frequency	28	60
	Percent	32	68
Cultural values	Frequency	36	52
	Percent	41	59
Political values	Frequency	16	72
	Percent	18	82
Educational values	Frequency	43	45
	Percent	49	51
Entertainment	Frequency	34	54
	Percent	38.5	61.5

Table 2 Methods used

Category		Yes	No
Discussion	Frequency	60	28
	Percent	68	32
Analysis	Frequency	22	66
	Percent	25	75
Opinion	Frequency	26	62
	Percent	29.5	70.5

Table 3 Position

Category		Yes	No
Positive support	Frequency	81	7
	Percent	92	8
Oppositionist	Frequency	6	82
	Percent	7	93
Neutrality	Frequency	-	88
	Percent	-	100

Table 4 Secondary materials

Category		Yes	No
Photos	Frequency	22	66
	Percent	25	75
Videos	Frequency	57	31
	Percent	65	35
Cartoons	Frequency	32	56
	Percent	36.5	63.5
Quran verses	Frequency	12	76
	Percent	13.5	86.5
Hadith sayings	Frequency	9	79
	Percent	10	90
Proverbs	Frequency	-	88
	Percent	-	100
Diagrams	Frequency	-	88
	Percent	-	100
Others	Frequency	8	80
	Percent	9	91

Table 5 Length of episode

Category		Yes	No
Less than 30 minutes	Frequency	36	52
	Percent	41	59
Less than 45 minutes	Frequency	7	81
	Percent	8	92
Less than 60 minutes	Frequency	44	44
	Percent	50	50

Table 6 Disruption in episode

Category		Yes	No
Commercial advertisements	Frequency	-	88
	Percent	-	100
TV station break	Frequency	25	63
	Percent	28.5	71.5
Call for prayers	Frequency	15	73
	Percent	17	83
Regular breaks	Frequency	15	73
	Percent	17	83

Table 7 Who are the participants

Category		Yes	No
Experts, specialists	Frequency	41	47
	Percent	46.5	53.5
Regular observers	Frequency	-	88
	Percent	-	100
Factional official or government representative	Frequency	-	88
	Percent	-	100
NGO workers	Frequency	-	88
	Percent	-	100
Religious figures	Frequency	-	88
	Percent	-	100
Average citizens	Frequency	7	81
	Percent	8	92
Male	Frequency	51	37
	Percent	58	42
Female	Frequency	37	51
	Percent	42	58
Child	Frequency	45	43
	Percent	51	49

Table 8 Form of participation

Category		Yes	No
By phone/sms	Frequency	35	53
	Percent	40	60
E-mail	Frequency	9	79
	Percent	10	90

Studio	Frequency	48	40
	Percent	54.5	45.5
Social media	Frequency	-	88
	Percent	-	100
Pre-recorded interviews	Frequency	36	52
	Percent	41	59

Table 9 Function of participation

Category		Yes	No
Clarification	Frequency	23	65
	Percent	28.5	71.5
Correction of information	Frequency	3	85
	Percent	3.5	96.5
Discuss solutions	Frequency	3	85
	Percent	3.5	96.5
Present points of view	Frequency	20	68
	Percent	22.5	77.5
Share personal experience	Frequency	32	56
	Percent	36.5	63.5
Children education	Frequency	43	45
	Percent	49	51
Entertainment and fun	Frequency	34	54
	Percent	38.5	61.5

Pioneers of Tomorrow

Table 10 Themes

Category		Yes	No
Nationalism and national discourse	Frequency	4	19
	Percent	17.5	82.5
Religious values	Frequency	7	16
	Percent	30.5	69.5
Citizens' rights and obligations	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Resistance and resistance literature	Frequency	2	21
	Percent	8.5	91.5
Social values	Frequency	12	11
	Percent	52	48
Cultural values	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100

Political values	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Educational values	Frequency	20	3
	Percent	87	13
Entertainment	Frequency	4	19
	Percent	17.5	82.5

Table 11 Methods used

Category		Yes	No
Discussion	Frequency	23	-
	Percent	100	-
Analysis	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Opinion	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100

Table 12 Position

Category		Yes	No
Positive support	Frequency	19	4
	Percent	82.5	17.5
Oppositionist	Frequency	4	19
	Percent	17.5	82.5
Neutrality	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100

Table 13 Secondary materials

Category		Yes	No
Photos	Frequency	67	23
	Percent	-	100
Videos	Frequency	13	10
	Percent	56.5	43.5
Cartoons	Frequency	10	13
	Percent	43.5	56.5
Quran verses	Frequency	9	14
	Percent	39	61
Hadith sayings	Frequency	7	16
	Percent	30.5	69.5
Proverbs	Frequency	-	23

	Percent	-	100
Diagrams	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Others	Frequency	4	19
	Percent	17.5	82.5

Table 14 Length of episode

Category		Yes	No
Less than 30 minutes	Frequency	1	22
	Percent	4.5	95.5
Less than 45 minutes	Frequency	5	18
	Percent	21.5	78.5
Less than 60 minutes	Frequency	17	6
	Percent	74	26

Table 15 Disruption in episode

Category		Yes	No
Commercial advertisements	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
TV station break	Frequency	20	3
	Percent	87	13
Call for prayers	Frequency	15	8
	Percent	65	35
Regular breaks	Frequency	2	21
	Percent	8.5	91.5

Table 16 Who are the participants

Category		Yes	No
Experts, specialists	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Regular observers	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Factional official or government representative	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
NGO workers	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Religious figures	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100

Average citizens	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Male	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Female	Frequency	5	18
	Percent	21.5	78.5
Child	Frequency	22	1
	Percent	95.5	4.5

Table 17 Form of participation

Category		Yes	No
By phone/sms	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
E-mail	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Studio	Frequency	16	7
	Percent	69.5	30.5
Social media	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Pre-recorded interviews	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100

Table 18 Function of participation

Category		Yes	No
Clarification	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Correction of information	Frequency	1	22
	Percent	4.5	95.5
Discuss solutions	Frequency	2	21
	Percent	8.5	91.5
Present points of view	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Share personal experience	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Children education	Frequency	20	3
	Percent	87	13
Entertainment and fun	Frequency	4	19
	Percent	17.4	82.6

Burning Brands

Table 19 Themes

Category		Yes	No
Nationalism and national discourse	Frequency	1	20
	Percent	5	95
Religious values	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Citizens rights and obligations	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Resistance and resistance literature	Frequency	5	16
	Percent	24	76
Social values	Frequency	1	20
	Percent	5	95
Cultural values	Frequency	13	8
	Percent	62	38
Political values	Frequency	8	13
	Percent	38	62
Educational values	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Entertainment	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100

Table 20 Methods used

Category		Yes	No
Discussion	Frequency	6	15
	Percent	28.5	71.5
Analysis	Frequency	6	15
	Percent	28.5	71.5
Opinion	Frequency	10	11
	Percent	47.5	52.5

Table 21 Position

Category		Yes	No
Positive support	Frequency	18	3
	Percent	86	14
Oppositionist	Frequency	2	19
	Percent	9.5	90.5
Neutrality	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	0	100

Table 22 Secondary materials

Category		Yes	No
Photos	Frequency	1	20
	Percent	5	95
Videos	Frequency	2	19
	Percent	9.5	90.5
Cartoons	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Quran verses	Frequency	3	18
	Percent	14.5	85.5
Hadith sayings	Frequency	2	19
	Percent	9.5	90.5
Proverbs	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Diagrams	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Others	Frequency	4	17
	Percent	19	81

Table 23 Length of episode

Category		Yes	No
Less than 30 minutes	Frequency	1	20
	Percent	5	95
Less than 45 minutes	Frequency	1	20
	Percent	5	95
Less than 60 minutes	Frequency	16	5
	Percent	76	24

Table 24 Disruption in episode

Category		Yes	No
Commercial advertisements	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
TV station break	Frequency	5	16
	Percent	24	76
Call for prayers	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Regular breaks	Frequency	13	8
	Percent	62	38

Table 25 Who are the participants

Category		Yes	No
Experts, specialists	Frequency	20	1
	Percent	95	5
Regular observers	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Factional official or government representative	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
NGO workers	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Religious figures	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Average citizens	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Male	Frequency	21	-
	Percent	100	-
Female	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Child	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100

Table 26 Form of participation

Category		Yes	No
By phone/sms	Frequency	3	18
	Percent	14.5	85.5
E-mail	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Studio	Frequency	21	-
	Percent	100	-
Social media	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Pre-recorded interviews	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100

Table 27 Function of participation

Category		Yes	No
Clarification	Frequency	7	14
	Percent	33.5	66.5
Correction of	Frequency	2	19

information	Percent	9.5	90.5
Discuss solutions	Frequency	1	20
	Percent	5	95
Present points of view	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Share personal experience	Frequency	13	8
	Percent	62	38
Children education	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Entertainment and fun	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100

Sesame Street

Table 28 Themes

Category		Yes	No
Nationalism and national discourse	Frequency	2	21
	Percent	8.5	91.5
Religious values	Frequency	1	22
	Percent	4.5	95.5
Citizens rights and obligations	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Resistance and resistance literature	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Social values	Frequency	12	11
	Percent	52	48
Cultural values	Frequency	2	21
	Percent	8.5	91.5
Political values	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Educational values	Frequency	23	-
	Percent	100	-
Entertainment	Frequency	23	-
	Percent	100	-

Table 29 Methods used

Category		Yes	No
Discussion	Frequency	23	-
	Percent	100	-
Analysis	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Opinion	Frequency	1	22
	Percent	4.5	95.5

Table 30 Position

Category		Yes	No
Positive support	Frequency	23	-
	Percent	100	-
Oppositionist	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Neutrality	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100

Table 31 Secondary materials

Category		Yes	No
Photos	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Videos	Frequency	21	2
	Percent	91.5	8.5
Cartoons	Frequency	22	1
	Percent	95.5	4.5
Quran verses	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Hadith sayings	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Proverbs	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Diagrams	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Others	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100

Table 32 Length of episode

Category	Yes	No
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Less than 30 minutes	Frequency	23	-
	Percent	100	-
Less than 45 minutes	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Less than 60 minutes	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100

Table 33 Disruption in episode

Category		Yes	No
Commercial advertisements	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
TV station break	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Call for prayers	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Regular breaks	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100

Table 34 Who are the participants

Category		Yes	No
Experts, specialists	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Regular observers	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Factional official or government representative	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
NGO workers	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Religious figures	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Average citizens	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Male	Frequency	9	14
	Percent	39.5	60.5
Female	Frequency	13	10
	Percent	56.5	43.5
Child	Frequency	23	-
	Percent	100	-

Table 35 Form of participation

Category		Yes	No 1
By phone/sms	Frequency	9	14
	Percent	39	61
E-mail	Frequency	9	14
	Percent	39	61
Studio	Frequency	11	12
	Percent	48	52
Social media	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Pre-recorded interviews	Frequency	15	8
	Percent	65	35

Table 36 Function of participation

Category		Yes	No
Clarification	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Correction of information	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Discuss solutions	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Present points of view	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Share personal experience	Frequency	-	23
	Percent	-	100
Children education	Frequency	23	-
	Percent	100	-
Entertainment and fun	Frequency	23	-
	Percent	100	-

Cultural Flashes

Table 37 Themes

Category		Yes	No
Nationalism and national discourse	Frequency	4	17
	Percent	19	81
Religious values	Frequency	-	21

	Percent	-	100
Citizens rights and obligations	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Resistance and resistance literature	Frequency	2	19
	Percent	9.5	90.5
Social values	Frequency	3	18
	Percent	14.5	85.5
Cultural values	Frequency	21	-
	Percent	100	-
Political values	Frequency	8	13
	Percent	38	62
Educational values	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Entertainment	Frequency	7	14
	Percent	33.5	66.5

Table 38 Methods used

Category		Yes	No
Discussion	Frequency	8	13
	Percent	38	62
Analysis	Frequency	16	5
	Percent	76	24
Opinion	Frequency	15	6
	Percent	71.5	28.5

Table 39 Position

Category		Yes	No
Positive support	Frequency	21	-
	Percent	100	-
Oppositionist	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Neutrality	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100

Table 40 Secondary materials

Category		Yes	No
Photos	Frequency	21	-
	Percent	100	-

Videos	Frequency	21	-
	Percent	100	-
Cartoons	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Quran verses	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Hadith sayings	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Proverbs	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Diagrams	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Others	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100

Table 41 Length of episode

Category		Yes	No
Less than 30 minutes	Frequency	11	10
	Percent	52.5	47.5
Less than 45 minutes	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Less than 60 minutes	Frequency	10	11
	Percent	47.5	52.5

Table 42 Disruption in episode

Category		Yes	No
Commercial advertisements	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
TV station break	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Call for prayers	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Regular breaks	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100

Table 43 Who are the participants

Category		Yes	No
Experts, specialists	Frequency	21	-
	Percent	100	-
Regular observers	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Factional official or government representative	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
NGO workers	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Religious figures	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Average citizens	Frequency	7	14
	Percent	33.5	66.5
Male	Frequency	21	0
	Percent	100	0
Female	Frequency	19	2
	Percent	90.5	9.5
Child	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100

Table 44 Form of participation

Category		Yes	No
By phone/sms	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
E-mail	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Studio	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Social media	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Pre-recorded interviews	Frequency	21	-
	Percent	100	-

Table 45 Function of participation

Category		Yes	No
Clarification	Frequency	18	3
	Percent	85.5	14.5

Correction of information	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Discuss solutions	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Present points of view	Frequency	20	1
	Percent	95	5
Share personal experience	Frequency	19	2
	Percent	90.5	9.5
Children education	Frequency	-	21
	Percent	-	100
Entertainment and fun	Frequency	7	14
	Percent	33.5	66.5

Appendix 7
List of Personal Interviews

- Y. Abu Jarad on *Burning Brands* and decision making, at ASC, Gaza City, 12 July 2013
- A. Al Amriti, on *Pioneers of Tomorrow* production, at ASC, Gaza City, 11 November 2013
- S. Al Asfar on *Cultural Flashes* media production, at PSC, Gaza City, 30 November 2013
- A. Alhessi, on *Al Aqsa Satellite Channel* media production, Gaza City, 2 December 2013
- S. Abu Mohsen on *Al Aqsa Satellite Channel* media and cultural programming, at ASC, Gaza City, 6 December 2013
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Education

Ph.D, Media and Communications (*Expected June 2016*), [Erasmus University](#) [Rotterdam]
 M.A., International Political Economy and Development (2010), [Erasmus University](#) [Rotterdam]
 B.A., English Literature (2006), [Islamic University of Gaza](#), [Gaza, Palestine]
Professional Development, Photography & Journalism (August 2001), National Languages Centre [Gaza, Palestine]
Professional Development, Bidirectional Translation of English and Arabic (2000), Al Hoda Languages Center [Gaza, Palestine]
Professional Development, International Public Relations (May 1999), Al Hoda Languages Center [Gaza, Palestine]

Academic Employment

Research Fellow, *International Institute of Social Studies (ISS)* The Hague, Netherlands Sep. 2009-Dec. 2010

Publications

Omer, M. (forthcoming). *On the Pleasures of Living in Gaza*. New York: OR Books.
 Omer, M. (forthcoming). *Cultural and Children's Programs on Palestinian Satellite TV: Beyond Factionalism*. Rotterdam: Erasmus University Press.
 Omer, M. (2015). *Shell Shocked: On the Ground Under Israel's Gaza Assault*. Chicago: Haymarket Books (Translated from English into Chinese, Hindi, Norwegian and Portuguese)
 Omer, M. (2015). "Against All Odds: Media Survive in Palestine." *Global Media Journal, African Edition*, 9(2), pp. 1-31.
 Bauck, P. & M. Omer (2013). *The Oslo Accords: A Critical Assessment*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press.

Awards

Named one of "The 500 Most Powerful Arabs in the World" (2013) by *Arabian Business*
<http://www.arabianbusiness.com/arabian-business-power-500-2013-493796.html>
 Lannan Cultural Freedom Award (2012), *Lannan Foundation*
 The Ossietzky Prize (2009), *Norwegian Pen*
 2008 Press Freedom Prize (2009), Stockholm MFA International Press Centre, *Reporters Without Borders – Swedish Section*
 Honorable Mention, 20 Top Global Media Figures (2009), *PULSE*
<https://pulsemedia.org/2009/12/31/pulse-20-top-global-media-figures-of-2009/>
 Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism (2008), British Academy of Television Arts (BAFTA)
 Best Youth Voice (2006), First National Ethnic Media Awards, *New America Media*

Lectures & Speeches

Guest Lecturer, "Gaza in the American Mediasphere," America, Media, and the Middle East, <i>Boston College</i> (Via Skype)	Boston, USA	Apr. 2016
Guest Lecturer, "Media Globalization," Introduction to International Journalism, <i>Al Aqsa University</i>	Gaza, Palestine	5 Mar. 2016
Keynote Speaker, "The Sesame Street We Never Knew Before: On Children's TV in the Middle East," New Voices in Social Sciences Seminar, <i>Stellenbosch University</i>	Cape Town, South Africa	29 Nov. 2015
Keynote Speaker, "Cultural & Children's Programs on Palestinian Satellite TV: Beyond Factionalism" New Voices in Social Sciences Seminar, <i>Stellenbosch University</i>	Cape Town, South Africa	23 Nov. 2015
Guest Lecturer, "Palestine and the US Media," America, Media, and the Middle East, <i>Boston College</i> (Via Skype)	Boston, USA	Mar. 2015
Keynote Speaker, <i>Media Coverage of International Justice</i>	Beirut, Lebanon	6-9 Jan. 2013
Speaker, <i>United Nations Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East</i>	Geneva, Switzerland	11-13 June 2012
Guest Lecturer, "Press Coverage of Arab Spring," Stabile Center for Investigative Journalism, Graduate School of Journalism, <i>Columbia University</i>	New York, USA	Apr. 2012
Guest Lecturer, "Journalism in Conflict Zones," Global Media Cultures, <i>Gettysburg College</i>	Gettysburg, USA	Apr. 2012
Guest Lecturer, "Media Profile," Investigative Journalism, Graduate School of Journalism, <i>Columbia University</i>	New York, USA	Mar. 2012
Guest Lecturer, "Risks Facing Journalists," Covering Conflict, Graduate School of Journalism, <i>Columbia University</i>	New York, USA	Mar. 2012
Guest Lecturer, "The Egyptian Revolution," Image and Sound, Graduate School of	New York, USA	Mar. 2012

Journalism, <i>Columbia University</i>		
Guest Lecturer, "Securing Journalist Resources," Data Journalism, Graduate School of Journalism, <i>Columbia University</i>	New York, USA	Mar. 2012
Guest Lecturer, "Palestinian Media in War" in MCC-UE 1762: Cultural Geography of Commodities, Dr. Helga Tawil-Souri, Department of Media, Culture and Communication, <i>New York University</i>	New York, USA	Mar. 2012
Guest Lecturer, "Covering Religion," Graduate School of Journalism, <i>Columbia University</i>	New York, USA	Feb. 2012
Guest Lecturer, "The Egyptian Revolution," The Written Word, Graduate School of Journalism, <i>Columbia University</i>	New York, USA	Feb. 2012
Guest Lecturer "The Egyptian Revolution," Audience and Engagement, Graduate School of Journalism, <i>Columbia University</i>	New York, USA	Feb. 2012
Featured Speaker, "The Siege; The Crisis; The People and The Land," <i>Stony Point Center</i>	Stony Point, USA	5 Mar. 2011
Featured Speaker, "The Siege; The Crisis; The People and The Land," <i>Riverside Church</i>	New York, USA	4 Mar. 2011
Featured Speaker, "The Siege; The Crisis; The People and The Land," <i>Temple University</i>	Philadelphia, USA	3 Mar. 2011
Featured Speaker, "The Siege; The Crisis; The People and The Land," <i>Princeton Theological Seminary</i> (Mackay Campus Center, 7pm)	Princeton, USA	2 Mar. 2011
Keynote Speaker, "My Role: Covering War," University Hall Opening Ceremony, <i>University of Bergen</i>	Bergen, Norway	21 Sep. 2010
Lecturer, "Journalism Practices in a War Context," Open School of Journalism, <i>University of Groningen</i>	Groningen, Netherlands	12 Apr. 2010
Featured Speaker, "Daily Life in Gaza," Santa Fe Unitarian Church	Santa Fe, USA	9 Apr. 2010
Featured Speaker, "Welcome to Hell: Life Under Siege in Gaza," <i>Albuquerque Mennonite Church</i>	Albuquerque, USA	
Lecturer, "Structural Violence in Palestine," <i>University of New Mexico</i>	Albuquerque, USA	8 Apr. 2010
Featured Speaker, "Comparative Media: Aljazeera and CNN," University of Houston	Houston, USA	7 Apr. 2010
Featured Speaker, "Reflections on Life and War in Gaza," <i>De Paul University</i>	Chicago, USA	5 Apr. 2010
Lecturer, "Palestine-Israeli Conflict," Center for Peace Studies, <i>Tromso University</i>	Tromso, Norway	20 Nov. 2009
Guest Lecturer, "Historical Accounts of Arab-Israeli conflict, Diplomacy and Politics in the Modern Middle East," Dr. Toby Jones, <i>Rutgers University</i>	New Brunswick, USA	13 Nov. 2009
Guest Lecturer, "The War You Don't See," Department of History, <i>Columbia University</i>	New York, USA	12 Nov. 2009
Guest Lecturer, "Children Caught in Conflict," <i>Northeastern University School of Law</i>	Boston, USA	9 Nov. 2009
Guest Lecturer, "Children Caught in Conflict," <i>Emmerson College</i>	Boston, USA	9 Nov. 2009
Featured Speaker, "Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza," <i>Palestine Cultural Center</i>	Boston, USA	7 Nov. 2009
Guest Lecturer, "Children Caught in Conflict," <i>Harvard University</i>	Cambridge, USA	6 Nov. 2009
Guest Lecturer, "Journalism Under Fire," Department of Media Studies, <i>Stockholm University</i>	Stockholm, Sweden	17 Feb. 2009
Featured Speaker, <i>Greek Parliament</i>	Athens, Greece	June 2008
Featured Speaker, <i>Swedish Parliament</i>	Stockholm, Sweden	June 2008
Featured Speaker, <i>United Kingdom House of Commons</i>	London, England	June 2008
Featured Speaker, <i>Dutch Parliament Standing Committee for Foreign Affairs</i>	The Netherlands	June 2007
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Denver Press Club</i>	Denver, USA	12 Dec. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Woman's Building</i>	San Francisco, USA	11 Dec. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>UHW/SEIU Hall</i>	Sacramento, USA	10 Dec. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Glendale Central Library</i>	Glendale, USA	9 Dec. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Four Points Sheraton Hotel</i>	San Diego, USA	8 Dec. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Trauma and Resilience in Gaza," Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, <i>University of San Diego</i>	San Diego, USA	8 Dec. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Southern California Library</i>	Los Angeles, USA	7 Dec. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Taste of Jerusalem Restaurant</i>	Washington, USA	6 Dec. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Friends Center</i>	Philadelphia, USA	5 Dec. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Memorial United Church of Christ</i>	Fitchburg, USA	3 Dec. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>In These Times Magazine Building</i>	Chicago, USA	2 Dec. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Princeton University</i>	Princeton, USA	1 Dec. 2006

Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Hunter College</i>	New York, USA	30 Nov. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Centre Congregational Church</i>	Brattleboro, USA	29 Nov. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Northeastern University</i>	Boston, USA	28 Nov. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Palestine Center</i>	Washington, USA	28 Nov. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>Zeitgeist Arts Center</i>	New Orleans, USA	27 Nov. 2006
Featured Speaker, "Gaza on the Ground," <i>University of the Incarnate Word</i>	San Antonio, USA	26 Nov. 2006

Other Relevant Professional Experience

Diplomacy & International Relations

Advisor, <i>Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs</i>	Gaza & Ramallah, Palestine	Apr. 2014-present
Consultant, <i>Luxemburg Ministry of Foreign Affairs</i>	Luxemburg	Aug.-Nov. 2015
Consultant, <i>Norwegian Representative Office</i>	Gaza and Jerusalem	2012-2014
Delegations Coordinator, <i>various European diplomatic missions</i>	Gaza, Palestine	Feb.-Nov. 2004

Communications

Communication Strategist & Consultant, <i>Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor</i>	Geneva & Gaza	Oct. 2014-Feb. 2016
Communication Trainer & Consultant, <i>Terre Des Hommes Foundation</i>	Amman, Jordan	Nov.-Dec. 2015
Webmaster, <i>Rafahtoday.org</i>	Rafah, Palestine	2003-2014

Development

Consultant, <i>Norwegian Development Agency (NORAD)</i>	Gaza, Palestine	Nov. 2014-Apr. 2015
Program Officer, <i>Norwegian People's Aid</i>	Gaza, Palestine	2005-2009
Conference Leader, <i>Norwegian People's Aid International Youth Conference</i>	Johannesburg, South Africa	15-19 Nov. 2006
Conference Leader, <i>Norwegian People's Aid International Youth Conference</i>	Johannesburg, South Africa	10-21 May 2005
Program Coordinator, <i>UNRWA Schools and UK Schools</i>	Gaza & London	2004-2005
Coordinator, <i>Palestine Children Welfare Fund (PCWF)</i>	Gaza, Palestine	2001-2005
Delegations Coordinator, <i>United Nations Relief and Works Agency</i>	Gaza, Palestine	2003-2004
Delegations Coordinator, <i>Norwegian Church Aid</i>	Gaza, Palestine	May-Oct. 2004
Program Coordinator, <i>Global Exchange</i>	Gaza, Palestine	Sep. 1999-Dec. 2002

Human Rights

Researcher, <i>Women in Black</i>	Gaza, Palestine	Dec. 2002-Aug. 2004
Researcher, <i>Mothers for Peace</i>	Gaza, Palestine	Nov. 2000-Dec. 2004

Journalism

Print

Reporter, <i>Washington Report on Middle East Affairs</i>	Washington, USA	Mar. 2003-present
Freelance Journalist, <i>National Zeitung</i>	Germany	2010-present
Freelance Journalist, <i>Middle East Eye</i>	London, England	Aug. 2014-present
Freelance Journalist, <i>New York Times</i>	New York, USA	July 2014-Sep. 2015
Freelance Journalist, <i>Fagbladet</i>	Oslo, Norway	June 2011-Dec. 2014
Reporter, <i>Vice News</i>	New York, USA	June 2011-Sep. 2012
Freelance Reporter, <i>Dagsavisen</i>	Norway	May 2011-Feb. 2014
Reporter, <i>Al Jazeera</i>	Doha, Qatar	May 2011-Aug. 2014
Freelance Journalist, <i>The Nation</i>	USA	July 2008-July 2014
Reporter, <i>Inter Press Service News</i>	UK	Oct. 2007-Dec. 2013
Reporter, <i>New Statesman</i>	UK	Sep. 2007-Oct. 2009
Reporter, <i>Arbetaren</i>	Sweden	May 2006-Aug. 2011
Reporter, <i>Morgenbladet</i>	Norway	Apr. 2003-Jan. 2011
Freelance Journalist, <i>Junge Welt</i>	Germany	May 2005-June 2008
Reporter, <i>Ny Tid</i>	Norway	July 2007-May 2009
Freelance Journalist, <i>Dagenbladet</i>	Norway	Dec. 2002-Aug. 2005
Reporter, <i>Berria</i>	Basque Country	Mar. 2003-Feb. 2005
Freelance Journalist, <i>Aftenbladet</i>	Sweden	Apr. 2001-Jan. 2005
Freelance Journalist, <i>Dagens Nyheter</i>	Sweden	Apr. 2001-Jan. 2005
Freelance Journalist, <i>Agence France Press</i>	France	Feb. 2001-July 2004
Freelance Journalist, <i>Art Voice Weekly</i>	USA	Oct. 2001-May 2004

Reporter, <i>Vermont Guardian</i>	USA	2005-2006
Producer, <i>Scott Anderson, Vanity Fair & New York Times</i>	USA	Nov. 2004
<i>Radio</i>		
News Analyst, "The Voice of the Cape," <i>105.3 FM</i> (South Africa)		Nov. 2012- <i>present</i>
News Analyst, <i>Radio New Zealand</i>		July-Nov. 2015
Reporter, <i>BBC London</i>		May 2005-Nov. 2008
Reporter, <i>KPFA</i> (USA)		Oct. 2002-Jan. 2005
Reporter, <i>Free Speech Radio News</i> (USA)		2004-2005
Reporter, <i>BBC Scotland</i>		2004
<i>Television</i>		
Reporter, <i>ABC News 24</i> (Sydney, Australia)		2014-2015
Reporter, <i>Democracy Now!</i> (USA)		Aug. 2004-July 2015
Reporter, <i>BBC News 24 TV</i> (UK)		2005
Producer, <i>Sky News</i> (UK)		Nov. 2003-Jan. 2005
Producer, <i>Norsk Rikskringkasting</i> (NRK, Norway)		Mar. 2003-Feb. 2006
Freelance Journalist & Producer, <i>Ramatan News Agency</i> (Palestine)		Sep. 2000-Nov. 2004
<i>Film</i>		
Director, <i>I am Sabah</i> (TRT TV, Turkey)		(<i>Expected Broadcast</i>) June 2016
Freelance Producer, <i>United Nations Relief and Works Agency</i>		June 2006
Content Producer, "The People and The Land, Part II" (USA)		2003-2005
Producer, "Weapons of Destruction" (Norway)		2003

Languages (Proficiency)

Arabic (<i>Native</i>)	English (<i>Fluent</i>)	Dutch (<i>Fluent</i>)	Hebrew (<i>Basic</i>)	Norwegian (<i>Basic</i>)
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Computer Skills

Word Processing	Windows & Apple OS	Web design	Microsoft Excel	PowerPoint
Outlook	Digital Photography	Adobe PhotoShop	iPhoto	Final Cut Pro

References

1. Melanie Huff, Dean, Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University mgh2@columbia.edu
2. Roger Waters, Singer and Songwriter caira43@aol.com
3. Dr. Sara Roy, Senior Research Scholar, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University sroy@fas.harvard.edu
4. Hans Jacob Frydenlund, Representative of the Kingdom of Norway [Jerusalem] [hjfi@mfano](mailto:hjf@mfano)
5. Mark Seddon, Speechwriter and Aide to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon Seddon@un.org
6. Jon Snow, Newscaster, Channel 4 [United Kingdom] jon.snow@itn.co.uk