

Covering Wars: Control, Manipulation and Propaganda

By Professor Mohamed Kirat, Ph.D
Dean, College of Communication
University of Sharjah, Sharjah
United Arab Emirates

Abstract

This paper looks at the failure of mass communication theory in explaining the behavior of media organizations during wars and crises. Principles of freedom of the press and objectivity are not respected and the journalism practice is not the same in times of war than in normal times. Very often, the news organization sides with the position of its mother country, and the journalist becomes "nationalistic" and patriotic and aligns himself to his country's position from the war at the expense of professionalism, objectivity, honesty and ethics of journalism practices.

As a theoretical framework the study used the market model and the manipulative model, and the case study approach- the Second Gulf War (1990-1991), the 9/11 attacks on the US, the Afghan War and lastly the Third Gulf War (2003)- as a research method. Major research questions of the study are: What directions did the coverage of the war on Iraq take and the nature of intrusion and pressures on journalists during their reporting of the casualties of the war. The hypotheses of the study were as follows: According to the manipulative model the media coverage of the Iraqi war will be partial and biased. The four theories of the press as well as the market model do not provide an explanation for the nature of media war coverage. In times of wars and crises journalism is mixed up with propaganda, public relations, psychological warfare and disinformation. The media practice gets away from professionalism

and the principles of objectivity and freedom of the press. Findings of the study show the failure of the theories of the press to explain the practice of the media in times of wars and crises. While the manipulative model explains the use and exploitation of media organizations and the communicators by military, economic and political forces for the purpose of propaganda, public relations, psychological warfare, manipulation, disinformation and distortion.

Introduction

It is said that war without television is not indeed a war, but rather an abstract event, whereas war on the screen is a live experience delivered to millions of people resting in their living rooms. In its' war on Iraq, the United States launched a large-scale media war against the Iraqi regime long before engaging in military action, via various newspapers, magazines, radio stations, satellite channels, and the internet. Intriguingly, the majority of studies addressing the medias' coverage of wars and conflicts have concluded that coverage was biased, distorted, obscure and distant from media ethics such as impartiality, fairness and freedom.

The war on Iraq has revealed, as have previous wars, the myths and lies echoed by the theorists of democracy, freedom of the press, and human rights. Consequently, the first and foremost victims of this war were the freedom of press, and the life of journalists themselves. Thirteen journalists and media workers have been killed amid their unwavering pursuit and deliverance of facts to viewers around the world. American procedures dealing with journalists have far exceeded the bounds of etiquette, respect of profession, freedom and independence. The U.S. simply applied the notorious phrase "You are either with us, or against us" literally. Journalists who were not embedded with the Pentagon would be at risk of being targeted by American military forces had they attempted to reveal facts or photos regarding massacres against children and armless civilians.

The notion of "freedom of the press" which is promoted by America on every occasion has been eradicated during its aggression on Iraq, as in the case of international conflicts and clashes. The American media machine has become no different than its

counterparts in long-established dictatorships. Accordingly, the first amendment of the American constitution that recognizes the principle of protecting the press and journalists from the tyranny of authority in favor of independence, impartiality, and freedom, has merely become a part of past archives. The United States has relentlessly silenced and eliminated anti-war voices, thus proving that power alone prevails. The freedom of press, principles of impartiality and integrity, and all norms that protect free speech and the "marketplace of ideas", have been flouted in the name of homeland security and national American interests.

This paper attempts to reveal the propaganda of the media machine and its' mechanisms of disinformation and distortion while covering wars and crises. Historically, the media has failed to be impartial and unbiased under the pretext of national interests. The media has mastered the fabrication of reality instead of covering and delivering it to the public during wars, the Vietnam, Algeria, Falkland Island, Second Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq wars to name a few. The media practices of allegedly modern and democratic western media were no different than those of dictatorships and authoritarian regimes. All succumbed to the will of politicians and merchants of war and weapons, thus sacrificing principles of impartiality, freedom of press, integrity and fairness in pursuit of the truth. Power and media were hand in hand during wars and crises all along.

The Problem

The failure of the mass communication theory in explaining the behavior of media organizations can be noticed during the coverage of wars and crises. Unlike normal circumstances, the coverage of wars and crises faces a number of stakes and challenges making the media part of the war itself. During war, principles such as freedom of the press and impartiality are not respected and the journalism practice is completely different than in normal times. Very often, the news organization sides with the position of its mother country during wars. (Carruters 2000, Kirat 1989, Boumaiza 2004, Layadi 2004).

Theoretical Framework

Theorists of the media practice and researchers studying the relationship between power, media and political and economical institutions have arguably failed in developing criteria and standards that explain the behavior of media organizations and journalists during wars. The four theories of the press: The Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility and Soviet Communist.(Siebert, Peterson, Schramm,1956) have not addressed the relationship between media and power, and media and journalists during war and crises. Yet it can be concluded that there is no difference in media practice during war and crises between different media and political systems. Dictatorships, democracies, developed and developing countries all become similar in their convergence of media, public relations, psychological warfare, propaganda, manipulation, misleading, and distortion. On the other hand, there is a significant difference in media practice in times of peace and normality in democracies that abide with the traditions of free press

The Market Model

According to this model, "news" is a category of events that must be delivered professionally and with the highest standards of impartiality. Journalists engage in gathering news and then report to their head of department. According to the market model, impartiality imposes itself on the media practice, and the media practitioner seeks news that primarily concerns society, regardless of other considerations. (Cohen & Young, 1981:17)

The Manipulative Model

According to this model, the media and its journalists are tools to serve interests of the owners of media organizations, which conflict with the interests of the public and any impartial and objective presentation of world events. Journalists thus practice their profession according to ideological criteria; they select and discard news with respect to the interests of the owners. They distort the truth and reality according to the propaganda needs of their superiors,

they also spread lies that refute the public and shape public opinion according to the political, economical, and financial interests of those who own the means of production (capitalists). According to the market model, "news" is a presentation of reality, whereas in the manipulative model the "news" is a fabrication of reality to serve the interests of the acting powers who are more than distant from the public. (Cohen & Young 1981:17-18).

Methodology

The study used the case study approach— the Second Gulf War (1990-1991), the 9/11 attacks on the US, the Afghan War and lastly the Third Gulf War (2003)- as a research method. These historical events were chosen in order to study how media organizations deal with wars and crises, and how they cover and deliver its events to the public.

Research Questions

- What are the trends of media coverage in times of wars and crises?
- What are the abuses committed against the right of journalists to practice their profession?
- To what extent was the coverage of the war objective, neutral, and impartial?
- Were suitable circumstances and requirements available for fair and objective media coverage of the wars and crises?
- To which extent did the media reflect the opinions and visions of their governments, and abandon professionalism, and objectivity in covering the war and crises?
- To what extent is the free and objective practice of coverage during wars and crises possible?

Hypotheses

- According to the manipulative model the media coverage of the Iraqi war will be partial and biased.
- The four theories of the press as well as the market model do not provide an explanation for the nature of media war coverage.
- In times of wars and crises journalism is mixed up with

propaganda, public relations, psychological warfare and disinformation. The media practice gets away from professionalism and the principles of objectivity and freedom of the press.

The First Case Study: Gulf War II: the Pentagon and CNN, and the story of the "complex"

During the second Gulf War in 1991 the Pentagon controlled media coverage of the war according to firm mechanisms, which allowed it to choose and select the news, events, and facts that served the interests and objectives of the United States. The Pentagon used the so-called "press complexes" and CNN was assigned "a spokesperson", hence not only did America control military operations but also the images of the events and facts of the war. Consequently, many of the principles learnt by journalists in mass communication and media institutes and colleges are abandoned during crises. Journalists are restricted by military administrators who address them to certain areas, and may even intervene in the information sent to the journalists' organization. The world witnessed the second Gulf War through the eyes of the American media, which was then controlled by propaganda and psychological warfare. Every detail of information sent from journalists to their media organizations was under the control of the Pentagon. Anything that was contrary to the American viewpoint was recognized as "not appropriate for publishing for security reasons."

The Second Gulf war was primarily a war of minds, ideas, and public opinion, and due to America's high experience, propaganda and disinformation capabilities, it managed to control the minds of millions through the control of images of war and its proceedings. (Atkinson, 1994; Denton, 1993). Reporters who covered the second Gulf War were dependent on the media guidance of the Pentagon and its press conferences, which produced data that was edited to hide certain information, and concentrate on other aspects that were not necessarily true, accurate and objective. This dependency failed to

provide the journalists with the integrity and objectivity required, which put them in a situation in which they were being used, exploited, and blackmailed by the merchants of war and weapons.

The American media connived with the Pentagon during the Second Gulf War, which allowed CNN to single-handedly lead the psychological war. The American military machine had learnt its lesson from the Vietnam War and its other defeats, where America also lost the battle of images. The U.S. and global media covered the brutality of the U.S. military and its heavy losses. For whether in Vietnam or Somalia, the media has cost America dearly, as public opinion forced the politicians to withdraw from the war and admit defeat. This has led military leaders among the coalition to implement a new strategy where journalists are adopted in military units "News Pools" to cover the war and its proceedings. These journalists are at the mercy of the military that controls their movements, filming and writing, and this is exactly what happened during the Gulf War II.

The Arab media was weak during the second Gulf War and satellite television channels were limited and in their very early years. And as most of media outlets worldwide, the Arab media submitted to idly watching and consuming the U.S. propaganda, disinformation and distortion. This blackmail and exploitation will probably trigger an awakening or uprising by media practitioners to catch up with hundreds of thousands, even millions of people worldwide who have continually expressed their views against the war and the militarism of America. (Hiebert, 1991; Jensen, 1992; Denton, 1993).

"In wartime, truth is so precious that it should always be attended by a bodyguard of lies", is a famous saying of British politician and statesman Winston Churchill. It is also said that war begins with words. History reminds us of how Napoleon Bonaparte brought a printing press from Paris during his invasion of Egypt in order to publish a newspaper that supplements his colonial ambitions by controlling ideas, minds and the practice of psychological warfare, propaganda, disinformation and obfuscation. In times of war,

propaganda overlaps with the media and psychological warfare. A war without media remains incomplete and insufficient, and the question that arises is: the problem of war and the media, which media does the viewer or reader or listener consume in the aggression on Iraq these days? Do notions of objectivity, freedom of delivering events and facts, and independence in addressing issues really exist, especially when it is said that war is deception? These days, the viewer or reader finds himself lost amidst a torrent of news, information, statistics, data and perspectives filled with contradictions and inconsistencies. Psychological war is actually imposed on the logic of objectivity, and impartiality. Hence, each party involved in the war relentlessly reveals information that serves their power and success in order to raise the morale of the army and its people while vanquishing the morale of the opponent. On the other hand, we note that the other party struggles to hide the magnitude of its victims and losses during wars, while focusing on success and results achieved. In this context, Dr. Hebert says:

“We have witnessed during the Gulf War either the use of the most advanced military weaponry in human history, or the use of the most intelligent words and images as weapons of war, or both ... the effective use of words and the media today, in this time of crisis, is as important as the use of cannons and bombs. In the end, it is not enough to be strong; it is now necessary to continue. To win today's war, the government does not only need to win the war in the field, but also needs to win the minds of their audiences Hiebert, 1991:107 115))

Since war is deception, everything is permitted in order to undermine the enemy, even if that requires lying, practicing of psychological warfare, propaganda, disinformation and obfuscation. Consequently, the end justifies the means, and the task of scrutinizing the numbers, information, and news provided by

conferences and press releases remains difficult.

Case Study II: the events of September 2001: Media from "fourth estate" to "mass misleading":

Many specialists, researchers and theorists in the field of the press, media and mass communication echo and confirm that the press is the fourth power, which monitors the three authorities of the community: the legislative, judiciary and the executive branch. Some of them went as far as to say that the press is the "barometer of democracy" and the basis for the redress of the poor, needy and vulnerable. And that the media is a strategic tool to uncover and investigate the truth, even Americans called it the "Watchdog Press", but the reality of the 21st century and the reality of the war on terrorism suggests that the press was transformed from a fourth power into a means to falsify reality, deceive consciousness and fabricate events and facts, as dictated by the forces of money, business and politics. In the era of satellite TV, the Internet and digital society, media today adapt events and facts in accordance with the powers that control the system, whether local or global. The Iraq war has revealed the mistakes, lapses and serious abuses that took place as media around the world subordinated with the ideas of weapon and war dealers, without daring to try and reveal the myths, lies, deception and fraud used by major news agencies and international media. (Michaels, 2003, Bazak, 2001).

The events of 11 September and the war on Iraq along with its repercussions and implications have affected all areas of life not only in the U.S., but rather all over the world. After more than three years since the symbols of American power in New York and Washington were hit, and after the hundreds of articles, reports, studies, and talk shows via political institutions, and different media across the globe, we wonder about the high price paid by the press on one hand, and the deviations committed against the honest performance of the media on the other. Media practice and freedom of the press, particularly in democracies, seem to be the primary victims of the 11 September attacks. The media's approach of dealing with the facts of September 11 revealed that it had abandoned its mission and failed to

provide its local and international audiences with the truth, background, and dimensions of the event. Was the media able to eliminate the confusion, uncertainty, misinformation, distortion, stereotypes and deliver reality as it is? Or has the media excelled in the fabrication of the reality of September 11 according to the desires, goals and interests in total disregard of fairness, commitment, and integrity? The Arab journalist Tayseer Alouni is imprisoned in Spain without a fair trial and without proof, as are many others around the world under the pretext of fighting terrorism and maintaining national security. Conclusively, there are no differences between authoritarian states and countries which claim to practice democracy and freedom of thought, opinion and expression and human rights. America being the bearer of "The First Amendment" and the country that reveres freedom of the press has flouted the principles it built during the last three centuries by commanding editors and intervening in editorials and media institutions, like any authoritarian state or dictatorship in the world. (Sultan, 2003) and this is what "Condoleezza Rice" did in the name of national security and defense of the vital interests of the United States of America.

The Sept. 11 attacks produced media attention that is still unparalleled in different parts of the world. Media institutions of all kinds, shapes and categories: financial, ideological and political have competed in producing news, commentaries, analytical programs and studies on the crisis and its dimensions, background, and implications. The question that instigated controversy and debate between academics and politicians is the interest in knowing how the media dealt with the incident of September 11? Have all questions of the curious minds of the readers, listeners and viewers been asked? Was the media concerned with why America was the one attacked? And who really attacked the U.S.? And what are the backgrounds and dimensions? Has the media wondered about how bin Laden was a hero in the eighties and a strategic ally for America in the fight against the Soviet Union and communism? And how he became a sworn enemy of America? How was he a hero and now a terrorist?

And who created Bin Laden? What happened? What is the relationship between what happened and the exploitation, injustice, oppression and inequality in international economic relations and politics? What about the terrorism practiced by many countries? And what is terrorism in the first place? Has the American media ever wondered about the tens of thousands of young Arab Muslims recruited by the CIA to fight in Afghanistan against the communist enemy?

Media in the twentieth century has become an industry that manufactures reality instead of explaining it to public opinion. Media in the era of the digital society became a force that actually reads and interprets reality in accordance with the financial and political forces that control it. An overlook on how American media organizations interacted with the events of September 11 gives us the following conclusions:

- Most of the Western media focused on Islam, Muslims and Arabs, and used the 9\11 events to mislead, distort and obfuscate, thus promoting stereotypes against Islam, Muslims and Arabs that have become known and been around since a long time. The media ignored the real reasons behind the events, and began to concentrate on discussing some incorrect practices deviating from the teachings of Islam, which has led to confusion and hatred amongst large sections of public opinion in Western countries and especially the United States of America. These waves of hatred led to incidents of racist actions against many innocent Muslims and Arabs in Western countries. The contradiction here is that the vast majority of communicators in the West, officials in the various media organizations are not well aware of Islam and have not even tried to understand this religion, and how its teachings are actually applied in factual life.
- Western media focused on the results of September 11 and its repercussions on international political relations and global economic map, and a lot of concepts and universals such as national security, and globalization ... etc, but ignored the

reasons that led to what happened and why the attack were on the United States exclusively. The motives behind these attacks have become secondary, unimportant and of no value, whereas the media's focus was restricted to Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. Several Western news organizations attempted to link ongoing events in Palestine with what happened on Sept. 11. Here we note that Israel is the only country in the world that has benefited from the events of 11 September, it has unremittingly terrorized the Palestinian people under the pretext of fighting terrorism. Thus allowing the butcher Ariel Sharon to implement all his plans to eliminate all signs of understanding and dialogue as the basis for the establishment of a Palestinian state. Sharon and his propaganda machine deployed in the largest and most important capitals in the world, took advantage of the Western media to convey the hatred of Arabs and Muslims and defamation of Islam.

- Western media interpreted the rise of Islamic fundamentalism as a result of poverty, unemployment, and lack of social justice, while completely overlooking the fact that the international system led by the United States of America is an unjust one that takes advantage of nations under tyranny, while American foreign policy plays the role of the world's policeman, triggering even more hatred towards it.
- Western media has not attempted to provide a depiction of international relations and the international system which is bankrupt and full of contradictions, as well as trying not to reveal much about U.S. foreign policy from the Marshall Plan, to this day. Nor has it tried to highlight the contradictions created by U.S. policy after the fall of the Soviet Union, which resulted in the collapse of bipolarity, thus leading the way for America to reign. The Western media machine was superficial in dealing with the facts of September 11, and even when it addressed the writings of some European journalists, led by French journalist Thierry Meyssan, author of the book

"Deception", it took them lightly without sufficient seriousness, and instead mocked and ridiculed them. Thierry Meyssan believes "that the bombings were organized from within the U.S. military command", while Roger Garaudy sees "the events of September as a plot colluded by intelligence agencies and the State."

- The Western media machine did not attempt to raise questions about the exploitation of the September 11 attacks by the United States in order to re-shape the world, and that the war against terrorism was in reality a war against international law and human rights, which are suffering even within the boundaries of America. Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights says that "the United States of America has invoked counter-terrorism since September 11, 2001 to undermine human rights, and we are therefore concerned about the state of civil rights in the nations that fight terror." The most obvious proof of this is the terrorism law practiced within the United States, which has violated all aspects of human rights and individual freedoms. The horrific acts practiced and the brutal treatment of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay is yet another aspect of the abuse of human rights. (Kirat, 2003).
- Concealing the truth is the highest degree of transgression and terrorism. Also, the falsification of reality, and the distortion and manipulation of the minds of the masses to satisfy a handful of weapon and war dealers is far worst in severity than the most brutal criminal and terrorist acts. The professional media conscience demands the employment of professionalism, ethics and commitment in the goal of understanding, communication, love and harmony between races, peoples and religions. Consequently, media becomes a source for the dissemination of human values, love, understanding, well-being and prosperity throughout the world, and not a means to ignite conflicts, wars, crimes, hatred and racism.

The third case study: the war in Afghanistan

In the early days of America's war on the Taliban, the Arab news channel Al Jazeera exclusively provided the entire world with reports and images of what was going on in the mountains of "Tora Bora" and "Kandahar". This situation did not please the Americans at all, especially that the American media depended on what Al Jazeera broadcasted. The only solution to end Al Jazeera's domination and exclude the Arab vision of war, according to American claims, was to hit Al-Jazeera's office by "mistake". Once the Taliban were defeated, American's influence extended in the country and completely took control. Subsequently, CNN – revived its alliance with the Pentagon - and the United States took control of all military operations and media including pictures, news and analysis, and this is exactly what war merchants are looking for. The United States not only utilizes military strategy, but also focuses on psychological warfare and propaganda to manipulate and control minds, ideas, trends and public opinion.

In times of peace or war, the public is the pivot of the communication process. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the public has a right in communication, and access to honest and objective news and information, because individuals of society use them to define their reference frame and mental images that affect their conduct and actions later. Therefore the issue of manipulation of the media is strategic and important, due to the serious implications on responsible behavior in society. The media's bids in time of war are far more important than military operations on the battlefield, and the responsibilities the media upholds in times of war far surpasses its obligations in times of peace. (Carruters, 2000) Hence, it is all about ideas, minds, attitudes and emotions. Goebbels' propaganda for instance led the Germans to embrace a war they did not need. But with his efforts and the pro-war agenda of the media, Germany engaged in a world war that still affects the world, as we know it today. The same applies to occupation and the exploitative

wars humanity has suffered from since ages ago. And in the midst of this all, the conscience of the professional will reprimand every journalists in the world that could have done something to avoid war, but instead we find these journalists either silent or complicit with the forces concerned with their interests and material gains, at the expense of tens of thousands of innocent children and civilians.

The obligation to respect the profession and to defend and protect it from those who try to trade or use it for purposes other than the public interest and community purposes is the major challenge facing journalists around the world. When we say "the public interest" it could mean the interest of humanity worldwide. The media can be a means of peace and dialogue between peoples, and can also be a means of mass propaganda, mislead and distortion that destroys instead of serving all mankind. Sadly, at the threshold of the 21st century, we still suffer from misinformation, obfuscation, distortion, stereotypes, propaganda, and psychological warfare. The public has become exposed to media messages and cultural products that present occupiers as liberators, the oppressed as oppressors and terrorists, and colonial forces as peaceful and democratic forces seeking security and peace for the world. And thus values and principles have deteriorated, and the public has become accustomed to viewing images of innocent children around the world being subjected to killing, oppression and exploitation. The human conscience is absent, or numb, and media organizations have turned into propagandists to justify the 'savage and barbaric actions of the merchants of war and weapons. Twenty years ago, America allied with President Saddam Hussein, and instigated him to wage a fierce war against the Islamic Republic in Iran. Today Iraq is portrayed by the media as a peace-loving state that was liberated from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein. America created bin Laden, and portrays him as the hero who will liberate Afghanistan from the communist Soviet Union. After several years, America attacks Afghanistan to liberate its people from bin Laden and the Taliban.

Fourth Case Study: Gulf War III: An "on air" war between the Iraqi Ministry of Information and the American Media Machine

As expected, the United States began preparations for its war against Iraq long ago, and further escalated its preparations after the events of 11 September and its declaration of war on terrorism. Its accusations to Iraq ranged from maintaining relations with al-Qaeda, housing Osama bin Laden, possession of weapons of mass destruction, even though inspection teams operating in Iraq for more than ten years have failed to prove this allegation. America justified its war on Iraq by claiming to spread democracy in this country and rid it of the "dictator" Saddam Hussein, and thus liberating the Iraqi people from this tyrant. It is important to bear in mind that more than 9000 media practitioners work in the American governmental body, with more than 1500 media and public relation practitioners in the Pentagon alone. In addition, hundreds of thousands of dollars were granted to establish a media center in the Saliyah U.S. military base in Qatar. (Chomsky, 2003).

The American media has worked for decades to win over the American and international public opinion. But this time it was difficult, as they did not succeed in their disinformation and propaganda agenda. Moreover, thousands of Americans demonstrated in cities across the United States, denouncing the war and calling for peaceful means and diplomacy. But in spite of all anti-war protests, the White House insisted on continuing its quest to implement plans to control and dominate Iraqi oil, and strategic locations in the region. It is essential to note the complicity of "Fox News" and other media organizations in creating suitable conditions for the global capital, the Christian Right extremists, and world Zionism to extend their influence and control to the wealth and strategic regions of the world.

More than 600 embedded journalists worked under the umbrella of the Pentagon to cover the Third Gulf War. U.S. military units offered them transportation to sites and events, protected them, and provided them with protective clothing and tools in precaution of any dangerous weapons. Cooperation with the Pentagon meant surrendering and accepting the conditions and "diplomatic" laws set in advance to control all that is written and broadcasted during the

war.

Since the very beginning of the aggression against Iraq, a visual and audio conflict ignited between the former Iraqi Information Minister on the one hand and the official spokesman of the Pentagon on the other. A new war commenced between the two parties, and the world was watching its events on live television – psychological and disinformation war began. Due to the strength of the American party, the Pentagon exercised various pressures and methods of intimidation, terror and even physical execution.(Mansour, 2003; Nadim, 2001, Abu Nour, 2003). Consequently, the war of data, images, and press conferences was more important than the proceedings of field operations. The struggle over who controls the news and images of the war was at its peak. This is what forced the Americans to establish a media center in Sayliah, Qatar that would accommodate the strategic importance of the event. The Pentagon directed over 600 journalists, 80% of them Americans, and the rest from coalition states and other countries. They supervised the journalists, and took them to the places they wanted, and interfered with what journalist's wrote and published and broadcasted. Therefore, war is primarily about the media in addition to military operations and tactical strategies in the field.

American experts have extensive experience in this field, as media and communication studies began with propaganda and psychological warfare. Also media influence and content analysis studies developed as a result of war, propaganda and conflict media and the Cold War. In Vietnam the Americans learnt a lesson they will never forget. During the war they failed to control the news and images being broadcasted, and so the American public witnessed the gruesome events of the war which triggered many movements to organize anti-war marches and demonstrations which eventually led to the U.S. withdrawal after its miraculous defeat in Vietnam (Braestrup , 1994) and the same thing happened in Somalia when the world witnessed images that insulted American soldiers.

The American and British aggression on Iraq revealed the contradictions and bankruptcy of the international system and its

deviation from the values, principles, and laws that govern the international system. America bombed the Iraqi television and telephone communication facilities to isolate Iraq from the world, and silence it in fear of presenting the truth, as well as expressing their point of view regarding the events and facts of war. America also bombed Al-Jazeera and Abu Dhabi TV and targeted journalists, because they provided news and pictures of the atrocities and criminal actions of the American military machine. America wants to dominate the world and tell the world its version of the story by selecting certain pictures, news and facts. On the other hand, it struggles to prevent others from telling different versions of the story to the world and its media. America practices double standards when it comes to Geneva Conventions; it applies to Iraqis but not to Americans. Accordingly, the United States has the right to insult the prisoners in "Guantanamo" and treat them as criminals and terrorists before trial, and Americans have the right to prevent journalists from covering the invasion of the island of "Grenada" and conceal the assassination of "Salvador Allende" and support "Alcontraz" in Nicaragua and overthrow its regime, and attempt to overthrow the Venezuelan President "Hugo Chavez," while the rest of the world does not have the right to exercise their right in information, communication, and upholding different opinions. This is contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with international conventions and norms.

The Iraqi, Arab, and international media in Iraq embarrassed and infuriated the Pentagon and the American-British coalition. The audio-visual outputs of these various media outlets exposed the atrocities committed by American and British military forces. The U.S. and U.K. failed to win the media battle and international public opinion. The media scene had changed, and within the first two days of the aggression on Iraq, images that revealed the magnitude of the Iraqi resistance and the capture and killing of a number of American and British soldiers, as well as the targeting of helicopters and military aircraft, were broadcasted.

On the other hand, coalition media questioned the credibility

of the pictures of Saddam Hussein's meeting with senior Iraqi officials, and said he was injured or that he had died, and the same thing applied to Tariq Aziz, Taha Yassin Ramadan and other Iraqi officials; the reality was quite the opposite, and at that point the public discovered the ultimate lie. Other lies were later promoted, such as the allegations concerning the coalitions' complete control of Umm Qasr, Basra, Zubair and other sites.

The bombing and the destruction of the Iraqi television, Al Jazeera channel, Abu Dhabi channel, a number of communications facilities as well as the deliberate killing of a number of journalists is a crime against freedom of expression, opinion, and freedom of the press. The broadcasted images and facts simply worry Americans and incite the American and world public against the barbarism of the conservatives of the White House who are motivated by the interests of oil companies and international Zionism. What's strange is that the Americans use the Geneva Convention when it comes to pictures of their captives, whereas they quickly forget this treaty when they silence the Iraqi media force through violence and bombing the Iraqi television, communication facilities, satellite transmission and deliberately targeting journalists. This is the American promoted freedom of speech, and these are the liberating actions of the American aggression "which came to liberate the Iraqi people and promote democracy". Yet it seems the American version of democracy is to silence others, be it through destruction, abuse or even physical execution.

The Arab media represented by Abu Dhabi TV, Al Jazeera, and Al Arabiya channel exposed the American-British coalition and revealed the fabricated claims of a clean and swift war which lasts only for a few days. The Arab media proved its presence this time, and was able to reveal the destruction of Iraq that does not distinguish between civilian and military targets. The bombing of the Iraqi television headquarters was an unmistakable proof of this. The Geneva Treaty prevents the targeting of civilians, and states, "that the strikes should be limited to military targets only." Luckily, the Arab media was able to prove itself and provide an alternative source of

information that aims to uncover hidden truths.

The Decline of the Fourth Estate, and the Need for A Fifth One:

The events that occurred in Fallujah, Iraq in the Third Gulf War, and the consequences and repercussions of September 11, 2001 suggest serious developments that could confiscate democracy, human rights and freedom of press even in the world's oldest democracies. The media, which was once known as the fourth-power, that monitors the executive, legislative and the judiciary branches is now nothing more than old literature. The role the media is playing nowadays is far from being an authority to monitor the merchants of war, weapons, and manipulators of minds. The media covering the massacres of Fallujah applauded the war instead of reflecting its ugliness and lack of legitimacy and legality and humanity. Portraying the media as the fourth-power is no more than an empty legend and unfounded theory. The media has become a tool that is controlled by the forces of money and politics.

The media, which was once supposed to detect the defects, abuses, distortions and the manipulation of public opinion has become part of the game, and a tool that justifies, explains and misleads in favor of the status quo and the actors in society at the expense of objectivity, freedom and truth. Not long ago, George W. Bush lied to the American people and the entire world and justified the war on Iraq by its possession of weapons of mass destruction, and Saddam's relationship with Bin Laden. The American people and the world believed his lie, and America invaded Iraq under the pretext of the war on terrorism. More lies were promoted, and America continued in committing its crimes under the pretext of "Al Zarqawi", and the terrorists in Fallujah while the American media and Arab world watched without a stir.

The European Union also joined in these crimes through its silence and tacit collusion at the expense of truth, human rights and individual freedoms. In Darfur, the world was convinced with the United States' allegations and its media machine's version of the story, and so the case was brought to the Security Council. On the other hand, the crimes committed in Fallujah, was not a concern to

the European Union, or the United Nations, or worldwide media, which was supposed to struggle and sacrifice for freedom, objectivity, and the truth at whatever the price. Media practices in the era of information technology, digital age and globalization prove the demise of the fourth power and the collapse of the vision that states that the media is a powerful force in society that monitors, investigates and reveals the facts. Even in democratic countries where governments are chosen through democratic elections, which enjoy the separation of authorities, particularly the judiciary and the executive branch, we note the breach of many principles, such as the right to access information, individual liberties, privacy, and so on. The American "Patriot Act" is also a violation and blatant interference in the privacy and rights of American citizens, especially citizens of Arab or Islamic descent.

Since the advent of globalization, the principle of the fourth power was emptied of its content, and so it does not mean much in the world of media monopolies and global cultural industries which shape media messages in accordance with particular perspectives and pre-determined logic. Large media institutions have imposed themselves on media industries, and have monopolized sounds, images and texts. Companies whose capital is estimated to be worth hundreds of billions of dollars such as "News Corp", "Viacom", "a. Or. AOL Time Warner", "GE", "Microsoft", "Bertelsmann", "Microsoft", "United Global Com", "Disney", "France Telecom", "Telefonica". The digital revolution has blurred the borders between the traditional methods of communication: voice, text, and images. It has also made the Internet a global means of communication that does not believe in limits, ideologies or language barriers. The Internet has become a means of communication worldwide, where hundreds of millions of human beings interact together. Globalization is the globalization of media outlets and communication, and the globalization of large companies, which hold budgets of hundreds of billions of dollars. These companies have become preoccupied with profit, loss, expansion, popularity and going global at the expense of the "fourth power" which has become

an old fashion overtaken by events in the era of globalization.

These large companies do not care about the abuses against the right of freedom of the press and freedom of speech. It certainly cannot be a fourth power or a counter-power that stands in front of selfish lords of money and political influence in the community. These large media companies have become an integral part of the system or "Establishment" as Americans call it, media institutions have regrettably sided with the power of money and politics at the expense of the fourth power and counter power. It is a part of the game where media institutions overlap with industrial enterprises, and the military. All sides have become integrated and collaborate for money regardless of the means and methods used and regardless of the price or the principles that are typically placed aside. (Chomski, 2003, Rushti, 2003; Boumaiza, 2004, Kirat, 2003)

With the demise of the fourth estate it is now imperative that the local and international community think of establishing a fifth power to deal with the forms and types of propaganda and manipulation of people's minds. The fifth power is the civil society that should organize itself to confront the power of the media, which has sided with the three authorities of the community, especially the authority of power of money and politics. What happened in Venezuela between the media and President "Hugo Chavez", and what happened between the media in Chile and the overthrow of "Salvador Allende" and what is happening these days in Fallujah, Iraq, are all evidence of the shameful bankruptcy of media organizations and their allegiance with money, politics, merchants of war and weapons at the expense of the innocent masses and public opinion, manipulated by the winds of propaganda and disinformation. (Ramonet, 2003).

Media in the twentieth century; the century of globalization and the digital age, are merely strategic means to dominate and control the output of thought, opinion and ideology. In other words, it is the justifier and interpreter of today's reality. A world monopolized and controlled by a handful of conservatives, and emperors of money and politics. The media in our world today is

characterized, according to the words of "Ignacio Ramonet," pollution and poisoning with all kinds of lies, rumors, misinformation, distortion and manipulation. And it is required to purify this information from all these impurities and pollutants. And from here the global system should consider the establishment of a global media monitor, to monitor abuses and manipulation of the media, which play a strategic role in the manufacture of public opinion domestically and internationally. In addition, civil societies in each country should constitute media monitors at national levels to monitor the misinformation, obfuscation and manipulation of truths in the interest of a handful of powerful financial and political figures. Huge media industries prefer serving their interests primarily at the expense of the interests of peoples, countries, nations and all humanity. Experiences in this field confirmed that the huge media industries have stolen the freedom of expression and freedom of the press from their rightful owners; the people, for the benefit of those with financial and political influence. These actions contradict with the d principles of democracy, free market of ideas, and responsibility of the media.

The laws governing media across the world today are outdated and unable to stop the series and scenarios of manipulation and exploitation of the media to serve the narrow interests of specific individuals. The events happening today are a disgrace to all the journalists who claim to defend the truth and uncover the hidden all violations of human rights. Civil society upholds a huge responsibility in combating the abduction of freedom of expression, individual liberties and freedom of the press of the peoples of the world at large, both in developed countries, which claim to practice democracy and freedom of thought and opinion, or in developing countries that suffer from foreign domination and local dictatorships. The critical state the media has reached in the 21st century signals serious dangers that should be considered and addressed as soon as possible, because it deals with misleading, and the manipulation of the world public opinion at the expense of the fundamental principles of humanity, human rights, freedom and dignity. What is happening

in Iraq under the name of fighting terrorism, and what is happening in Palestine and Afghanistan is a direct violation of human rights, freedom of expression and individual liberties.

The most dangerous dilemma humanity faces nowadays is the contamination of human thought, and the greatest crime experienced is distortion, and deception that seeks to hide the truth and promote lies and myths, thus denying people the right of knowledge, right of expression and the right to disagree. The world today needs a fifth power that can stop the collusion and alliance of the media with the merchants of war and weapons. A power that can salvage the right of knowledge, information, communication and opinion and grant it to the peoples of this world. Mankind cannot enjoy stability, security, tranquility and peace with the presence of contaminated media that spreads, myths, misinformation and manipulation. Dialogue between civilizations will not succeed if media organizations continue to practice their roles in a manner far from integrity, objectivity, professionalism, and commitment.

Conclusion

This study proved that no communication theory is applicable to the reality of media practice at the time of wars and crises, and that the logic of deception, distortion and manipulation imposes itself on the media practice. The notion of a fourth power, which monitors the three authorities in the community are mere words that not true in reality. Financial and political powers have a different opinion on how media institutions should handle facts and events during wars and crises. Media coverage of the Second and Third Gulf war was directed by political, military, and financial powers, rather than the logic of objectivity, impartiality, and the search for truth. Journalists were at the mercy of the military, and were working under great pressures that amount to - in some cases- physical execution. Journalists and their media institutions reflected the position of their governments and their countries at the expense of professionalism, objectivity, integrity and commitment.

The manipulative model explains the use of media in wars and crisis by the economic and political forces for the purpose of

disinformation, distortion, propaganda and psychological warfare, and this is what supports the first hypothesis of this study "According to the manipulative model the media coverage of the Iraqi war will be partial and biased." Also the results confirm the second hypothesis "The four theories of the press as well as the market model do not provide an explanation for the nature of media war coverage". And from case studies reviewed, the research confirmed the third hypothesis: "In times of wars and crises journalism is mixed up with propaganda, public relations, psychological warfare and disinformation. The media practice gets away from professionalism and the principles of objectivity and freedom of the press. "

The American President George Walker Bush. lied to the American people, when he declared war on Iraq because the latter possesses weapons of mass destruction, and that former President Saddam Hussein established relations with Osama bin Laden. It was the professional duty of the U.S. media to make sure of the facts mentioned in the President's statements. But the American media did not , thus contributing to the misleading of the American public and the manipulation of the truth and instead of helping in avoiding war contributed in waging war against Iraq, and with that flouting one of the main principles of free press in Western democracies and that is to monitor the government and detect its mistakes "The watchdog press".

During the third Gulf war, the American propaganda machine established working relationships with the media, by organizing a daily press conference in each of the Saliyah base in Qatar, the Pentagon, the State Department, and the White House. The Americans also used, celebrities, movie stars, music and all means of audio, visual and digital tools to promote their point of view not only to the American people, but also to the whole world. Propaganda and the techniques and arts of public relations will be a central part of any war in the near future. Governments will use all the slogans, means and techniques to manipulate public opinion, domestically and internationally to serve their interests and goals at the expense of truth, objectivity, neutrality, media ethics, freedom of press, the right

knowledge, the right to contact and human rights.

Freedom of the press was assassinated during the American-British aggression on Iraq and in many past wars and many crises while the world watched in silence. International political relations and international economic relations and the various organizations and international institutions have become ethically bankrupt and are now run and led by the logic of money, power, merchants of war and weapons, propaganda experts, and psychological warfare. We observe "on air" occupation in the name of liberation and democracy, and we witness "on air" the burning of libraries and the looting of museums, and the world watching, while America says it has come to spread democracy and freedom in the land of Iraq. In the midst of these contradictions, we find media institutions such as "Fox News" and "CNN" and others that cheer and applaud the war against the other peoples cultures and civilization. Is it time to impeach the conscience of professional media? Is it time to refute the myth of objectivity, freedom and independence of media? And is it time to reflect with oneself, and confess that the media profession these days has deviated more than ever from the track of ideals, which are to serve the truth and the noble goals of humanity. Although it regrettably seems that the manufacturers and merchants of wars, weapons, politics and money have a different opinion.

We conclude by saying that in times of wars and crises alliances occur - whether hidden or apparent - between media and power, and this creates a need to suggest an alternative to classical communication theories. The alternative that will explain the behavior and practices of the media during wars and crises come under the name of "Government Press Government Coalition Theory". Regardless of the owner of the media organization and its financier, and regardless of the political, economic and degree of democracy and freedom in society, according to this theory we find that the media in fact entirely in line with the government in times of war and crisis. Regardless of whether they are Western democratic countries or developing countries or dictatorships and authoritarian regimes. The media surrender completely to the ideology of the

government in the process of manufacturing, assembling and distribution of news, in order to fabricate, condition, and form local and international public opinion in accordance with the interests and objectives of the authoritative power.

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