

play in world politics in the years to come? Second, if Al-Jazeera existed wholly in the private sector, would its relatively independent and free approach be curtailed by possible government-driven commercial boycotts? Third, do Qatari officials genuinely believe in freedom of information, or are they using Al-Jazeera as a public relations tool to enhance their country's image overseas? And fourth, how can Al-Jazeera and similar media networks help foster better understanding between the United States and the Arab world?

Although there are no definitive answers to these questions, Al-Jazeera has set new standards for freedom for all the other Arab satellite networks. Credibility, audience size, and financial resources will serve as the essential criteria for the survivability of Al-Jazeera as well as other Arab satellite networks in the immediate future.

No Arab satellite TV network other than Al-Jazeera has ever attempted to present Arab views, opinions, and beliefs to the West with such vigor and legitimacy. Al-Jazeera officials seem to understand the power of public opinion, the role it can play in the vital formulation of policies in the West, and its influence in decisionmaking worldwide. Still a fledgling in the world of international media, Al-Jazeera is providing the Arab world with its own version of CNN, as a transnational—not just regional—network broadcasting real news and conducting free dialogues. It can be effectively argued that given the rise of Al-Jazeera, Arab views and concerns are directly presented to the world without censorship. It can be also argued that the West in general, and the United States especially, have seldom noticed the Arab world unless there was a crisis that threatened Western oil interests. One of Al-Jazeera's major accomplishments in this crisis was to force the West to look at the Arab world, as the Arabs would say, "with a new eye."

### 3

## THE BATTLE FOR THE ARAB MIND

---

It is 9:00 P.M. on a Tuesday night. At their home in an upper-class neighborhood in Cairo, Egypt, the Ragab family sits transfixed, watching their TV set. They are not watching a soap opera or a movie. It's a talk show broadcast on the Al-Jazeera network named *Al Ittijah Al Mo'akis* (The Opposite Direction). Similar to CNN's *Crossfire*, this is the most popular and controversial talk show in the Middle East.

The Ragab family has always been skeptical of Arab media news in general, the Egyptian media in particular, because, according to family members, they did not get any "reliable" news from either. Like many Arab natives, if they watched local or satellite channels, entertainment programs were all that was available. Accordingly, they described news about their own country received from Western networks, like CNN or BBC, as "more credible and comprehensive." Now all they watch is Al-Jazeera. In fact, Al-Jazeera programming makes more sense to the Arab communities than any Western network.

What interests Arab viewers—beyond the national obsession of soccer—is domestic, regional, and world news. Today, Al-Jazeera satisfies this demand and more. Perhaps the Arab public was primed for better television, including programs that offered

comprehensive news, news analysis, and talk show programs—even those that fostered flat-out confrontation. Although Al-Jazeera is not a Western media network, its managers and producers have taken a page from the Western media's playbook. Its talk-show hosts are younger and bolder, trained in journalism and imagemaking. Gone are the stiff and stonefaced pedants who dominate Arab TV news. Gone are the bland, traditional, and boring styles and formats of traditional news programs. For example, the first third of the fifty-minute prime-time news bulletin aired on the local Egyptian state-run network is devoted to little more than a review of the president's meetings and telephone calls, cabinet members' inaugurations of new projects, and senior officials' daily activities (it should be noted that virtually all Arab leaders are male). Al-Jazeera's news bulletins, however, provide in-depth investigative analysis of the day's events as they unfold, eschewing government officials' comings and goings.

Al-Jazeera, almost single-handedly, motivated millions of viewers in the Arab world, and in many Western countries, to buy satellite dishes to watch its programming. It could be argued convincingly that some Arabs have saved money specifically to buy satellite dishes at the expense of purchasing basic necessities. For example, in Egypt, where the satellite ownership level is still far below the 20–60 percent recorded elsewhere in the Middle East, the cost of a satellite dish is approximately L.E.1,400 (U.S. \$280). During an interview Abdullah Al-Hajj, Al-Jazeera's deputy manager, explained that in several Arab countries women have gone as far as selling their jewelry to purchase a satellite dish to watch Al-Jazeera. In the streets of any Arab capital today, satellite dishes cluster everywhere along the rooftops. Even in Saudi Arabia, where satellite dishes are banned officially, locals purchase and install them, ostensibly to watch Al-Jazeera.

In the Palestinian territories, where economics prevent many from purchasing satellite dishes, the Palestinian Central Bureau

of Statistics recently calculated that 78.2 percent of Palestinian households in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have some kind of access to Al-Jazeera.

Mohammed Jasim Al-Ali, Al Jazeera's managing director, described his network's goal, even as it competes with the local BBC or CNN news stations. "The challenge now is how to bring the audience back into watching their own channels. We treat them as intelligent, we give them the true story. For the first year, people watched us, but were very cautious. They wondered how long we could carry on, who's behind us, what our aim was. After that, our audience has grown, and we've grown," he says.

Al-Ali does not have access to sophisticated ratings systems to measure the numbers of viewers who watch Al-Jazeera (there is no Arab equivalent to the Nielson or Arbitron ratings systems used in the States). Satellite subscriptions provide incomplete data—it is complicated to calculate exact numbers of Arab viewers because satellite subscriptions come in multiple packages. The few surveys and polls conducted are questionable because their sampling methods are not statistically reliable. Too often, these surveys do not access random population samples or the samples are too small, so they do not provide accurate figures.

Although flawed, some studies and surveys may provide an initial indicator of the market penetration that Al-Jazeera has achieved. The Qatari newspaper *Al-Sharq* (The East) published an article on November 20, 2000, that reported the results of a survey it conducted among Arabic Al-Jazeera viewers in Washington, D.C., Jordan, and Sudan. In Washington, 79 percent of those surveyed, when asked for their opinion of Al-Jazeera, stated that they "strongly support it." As for their preferences, 64 percent said they prefer Al-Jazeera's talk shows; 29 percent said they like the news; and 7 percent said they like the correspondents' reports. Respondents were also queried about

why they watched Al-Jazeera: 43 percent cited reporters' freedom to pose any question to their sources; 22 percent cited programs that tackle sensitive issues; and 14 percent pointed to the apparent lack of outside government pressure.

The respondents in Jordan had somewhat different responses: 60 percent said they support Al-Jazeera; 16 percent said they opposed it; and 24 percent said they had "reservations" about its programs. Some 79 percent of respondents in the Sudan said the main reason behind Al-Jazeera's success was due more to the "weakness" of other Arab networks to take on different issues.

Al-Jazeera is popular partly because satellite ownership throughout the Middle East has become more than fashionable—it almost seems indispensable. In the more affluent Gulf countries, some 70 percent of the population has regular access to satellite television. One source reported that Al-Jazeera is broadcast into 60 percent of all Middle East households. Although interesting, this assertion is questionable because many households in the more populated Arab countries cannot afford to pay the service fees for Al-Jazeera. Nonetheless, many households that lack Al-Jazeera are never far from viewing its broadcasts. The network is available in many public cafés, and in more restrictive states, like Iraq, local bazaars sell videotapes of previously recorded Al-Jazeera programming.

Another Qatari newspaper, *Al-Watan* (The Nation), in an article published May 5, 2000, presented the results of an online survey that was conducted by the Al-Balagh Cultural Group for Serving Islam Online. The survey, comparatively large, included 1,026 participants and was conducted through the Islam Online website. In regard to the nature of "free" (i.e., balanced) news coverage, *Al-Watan* reported that 625 respondents said Al-Jazeera contained the most; 204 respondents cited the Saudi-owned Middle East Broadcasting Center, and 150 cited the Arab News Network (ANN).

Three years earlier, the same newspaper conducted a similar survey not long after Al-Jazeera started broadcasting. Results of the survey were published on May 17, 1997. That survey, which included a random sample of 500 Qataris in the capital city of Doha, showed that 79 percent thought that Al-Jazeera did not represent the Qatari identity. Much has changed in only a few years.

Al-Jazeera, although headquartered in Qatar, has managed to project an identity that transcends its physical location, reflecting an amalgam of Arab states. A diverse staff from different Arab countries helped establish this pan-Arab identity, which also reflects a broader editorial commitment. In an exploratory study recently published in the *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, media researcher Mohammed Ayish showed that 73.3 percent of Al-Jazeera's coverage is pan-Arab and that virtually no coverage is local to Qatar. Instead, Al-Jazeera's management attempts to locate issues that will resonate across many Arab audiences.

Given that the majority of the Arab audience appears to desire objective news coverage, Al-Jazeera is racing to stay ahead of the curve to fill that demand. The 1997 *Al-Watan* survey also reported that 61 percent of respondents said the channel was objective; 30 percent said it was not objective. Another 55 percent said they would prefer that Al-Jazeera be supported by the private sector, not by the Qatari government. And another 85 percent said Al-Jazeera needs still more independence.

In the five-plus years of its existence, Al-Jazeera has not only become the most-watched satellite-TV network in the Arab world but also infuriated every Arab government from Libya to Kuwait—both of which once threatened to pull their ambassadors from Qatar in protest.

Initially Al-Jazeera drew attention for airing sensitive issues and controversial debates. During the Algerian civil war, Al-Jazeera had the temerity to cover Algerian opposition party views and the Islamic fundamentalists' role in the internal strug-

gle. Al-Jazeera even dared to produce and broadcast a program that debated a most sensitive ongoing issue: Who is a Jordanian? (The majority of residents are of Palestinian descent.)

Such programming is not especially radical, and Al-Jazeera should not have caused such consternation among neighboring governments and citizens. On the one hand, much of Al-Jazeera's news would be considered perfectly normal on English-language television. On the other hand, its political debates reflect the everyday arguments that Arabs privately carry on among family and friends. The fact is that by broadcasting such issues in public—and in Arabic, no less—Al-Jazeera violated long-established customs. “It makes a hell of a difference when you say it in Arabic,” says Yosri Fouda, Al-Jazeera's deputy executive director, in an interview with the *Guardian* newspaper in October 2001. Many Middle Eastern states control the supply and media distribution of information, so it is understandable that these same states protested when audiences turned away from official programming.

Another Al-Jazeera mainstay is studio debate, during which viewers can phone in to ask questions and argue with talk-show guests and hosts. Sometimes arguments between hosts and their guests go on for hours, the antagonists wagging fingers and screaming at one another. According to Jian Al-Jacuby, an Iraqi reporter working in the Al-Jazeera newsroom, “For Arabs, Al-Jazeera is revolutionary. Arab people, for a long time, just wanted somebody to listen to them. That is the importance of Al-Jazeera: to let people talk.” Where public expression is often suppressed, Al-Jazeera has become an instrument for both marginal and silenced voices, whether radical or liberal, Muslim or Christian. Its programs often contain fiery debates and arguments that appear to be on the verge of fistfights, but Al-Jazeera's producers strive to maintain more than a semblance of intellectual rigor as well.

Al-Jazeera presents an array of views: secularists debate fundamentalists, Israelis debate Palestinians, Iraqis debate Kuwaitis. There is no bias. When Al-Jazeera hosted former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak on one of its talk shows in 1998, and when it interviewed the Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres more recently, Israeli officials praised the network for its credibility and professionalism.

In an interview with the *Jerusalem Post* on September 2, 2001, Gideon Ezra, former deputy head of the General Security Service (GSS) there and who has become a regular guest on Al-Jazeera's talk show lineup, claimed, “I wish all Arab media were like Al-Jazeera.” Ezra acknowledged further: “There I was in Jerusalem, with Marwan Barghouti [West Bank Fatah chief] in Ramallah, and the moderator was sitting in Al-Jazeera's London studio, and they were hearing me out, even though little of what I said could have been agreeable to them.” Ezra adds, “All of a sudden, an Israeli called in claiming to be a former GSS man who quit because he could no longer stand coercing Palestinians into becoming collaborators. Now that's what I call a free discussion.”

Another aspect of Al-Jazeera—one that is considered unique among Arab networks—is that it broadcasts major events live from the scene. When the hijacked airliners crashed into the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001, Al-Jazeera reporters were there, and they transmitted to Arab viewers live scenes of the twin towers crashing to the ground.

Moreover, when the United States and Britain commenced the bombing campaign against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, Al-Jazeera's correspondents were very close by. In fact, they were the nearest among all the broadcast stations in Afghanistan. Before the anti-Taliban forces' takeover of Kabul, in fact, Al-Jazeera was the only network to have a twenty-four-hour satellite link to the Afghan capital. (Other stations started to report from Kabul around mid-

November 2001, after the fall of the Taliban regime.) Al-Jazeera's Afghan outpost was little more than a small, ramshackle building where guests had to be filmed outside or, more likely, on the roof. The rudimentary set occasionally produced its own breaking news, as on the first night of U.S. strikes when Mohammed Halimi, a member of the Taliban foreign ministry staff, was being interviewed live on the roof. "While Halimi was speaking, we heard a big noise, like a bomb," says Mohammed Kicham, the Qatar-based anchorman of Al-Jazeera. "Suddenly we had no picture and no sound at all. After about five minutes, the sound came back and Tayseer Allouni [Al-Jazeera's Kabul reporter] reported that a bomb had fallen nearby. 'I'm sorry,' he told the studio in Doha, 'but the cameraman has disappeared and I've no idea where he is.'" The cameraman, it turned out, had fallen off the roof. "Fortunately, it's not a high building," Kicham adds. "So he climbed back and finished the interview."

In Cairo, the largest city in the Arab world and a longtime focal point of Islamic and Arab activism, the usual hustle and bustle of the crowded streets did not exist on that first day of U.S. strikes on Afghanistan. Most Egyptians gathered around TV sets in their homes and coffee shops, watching the news. They were not watching CNN; they were watching Al-Jazeera. "America, Afghanistan, boom! boom!" one Egyptian viewer said to a reporter. When he learned that the reporter was American, he shrugged and smiled, then went back to watching the set.

### IS AL-JAZEERA BIASED?

Many Westerners have accused Al-Jazeera of being biased toward the Palestinian cause. Al-Jazeera has a practice of describing Palestinian suicide-bombers who strike in Israel as "martyrs," which many consider a violation of objective news reporting. Walid Al-Omary, Al-Jazeera's correspondent in the West Bank town of Ramallah, described the complexity of his

position: "To be objective in this area is not easy because we live here. We are part of the people here. And this situation belongs to us also, and we have our opinions."

Perhaps this is one reason why Arab viewers relate more to Al-Jazeera than to Western networks. Many Arab viewers who watch CNN believe that American television is biased against Arabs. They have argued, for example, that the word "assassination" is seldom used in the U.S. media when describing the Israeli policy of assassinating anti-Israeli political activists who belong to various Palestinian factions. Such events are instead referred to as "targeted killings." This often feeds into a belief in much of the Arab world that the Western media skew coverage in ways that Israel would prefer, preventing Palestinians and Arabs from airing their positions as often as the Israelis.

Today, Al-Jazeera presents Arab views using a manner and language to which Arab audiences can relate. It is intrinsic within many Arab cultures to consider Palestinians who are killed by Israeli soldiers in the Palestinian territories as shuhada ("martyrs") because, to Arabs, they sacrificed their lives to defend their right to live in Palestinian territories. This runs contrary to much of the tone that is broadcast by Western TV media, yet it reflects more accurately the nature of the Arab view of Middle East events. However, following the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington, there is some debate among the Arab press, media, and public as to whether attacks on Israeli civilians constitute martyrdom. A war of words has been waged on Al-Jazeera between clerics in the region that have varying interpretations of resistance to what they see as Israeli occupation.

Al-Jazeera's managing director, Al-Ali, explained,

*We came with our own ideas and our own perspective. ... Al-Jazeera, from the idea up to the launch, was built by a staff coming from Arab countries. Maybe they had experi-*

*ence working with Western media—they are ex-BBC, ex-U.S. media—but all are Arabs. So they take the professional experience from the BBC, but their background as Arabs means we can adapt this experience and apply it to the Arab world. We know the mentality of the Arabs—but we also want the expatriate Arab audience, who are used to Western media.*

To a certain degree, what Al-Ali expressed is true. There is a fine line between a real reporting bias and presenting the news from an Arab point of view to Arab viewers throughout the world. Arabs educated in the West, and Arab immigrants in North America, go to CNN as the preferred source for any news about their respective home countries.

Sharon Waxman, a staff writer for the *Washington Post*, said it well in her article about Al-Jazeera on December 2, 2001. She stated correctly that every news organization is a product of the native culture in which it was conceived. “American-based news networks, for example, make the unspoken assumption that the state of Israel has the right to exist and that Osama bin Laden is evil,” she explained. “In the Arab world, that looks like bias.”

One well-known Saudi journalist, Jamal Khashoggi, stated that Al-Jazeera has a major problem with objectivity. “They are being led by the masses,” he asserted, “they don’t lead the masses.” Should the media be led by the people? Is it the duty of the media to lead the masses? It would seem that the theory of contextual objectivity—the necessity of television and media to present stories in a fashion that is both somewhat impartial yet sensitive to local sensibilities—is at work.

Another pointed criticism is that Al-Jazeera blindly pursues audiences and relies on sensationalism to gain those audiences. The talk shows have been dismissed consistently by Arab officials as nothing more than Jerry Springer-style shock TV. Nabil

Osman, head of Egypt’s State Information Services, told Waxman that Al-Jazeera is “no more than a tabloid.” There is an old Arabic saying, *khalif to’ raf*, which in English means “oppose and be known.” It could be argued that in the spirit of this saying Al-Jazeera has established a name for itself by creating and then driving controversy. Perhaps Arab audiences are now ready for such controversy.

### **AL-JAZEERA AND POLITICAL MOBILIZATION**

Many wonder if Al-Jazeera plays a real role in developing Arab audiences’ political awareness and in mobilizing public opinion to take political action. Is Al-Jazeera ushering in a new era of political change and accountability?

Some observers have claimed that it would be overly optimistic to conclude that Al-Jazeera can affect the nature of political systems in the Arab world. These observers add that Arab viewers may well change their minds because of something they see on television but that this might not effectively translate into political action. According to these observers, the political decisionmaking systems in most Arab countries are preconfigured to maintain a progovernment, centrist majority that allows increasing debate and discussion but that keeps real decisionmaking in the hands of small elite groups who have managed public affairs and matters of state for decades.

The argument that Al-Jazeera cannot promote a move toward greater Arab democratization and political mobilization seems one-dimensional. It is true that Al-Jazeera’s talk shows have neither initiated coups nor motivated the Arab people to revolt violently in the streets. However, Al-Jazeera has been credited with playing a major role in mobilizing support for the Palestinians and sustaining their current uprising, which started with the second Palestinian Intifada in September 2000. Millions of Arabs from the Persian Gulf to North Africa to the United States have been

watching footage of Palestinians clashing with Israeli forces. Many of those Arab viewers watched the Intifada live—a first. Al-Jazeera aired graphic scenes of Palestinian casualties and Palestinian stone-throwers fighting Israeli tanks and heavy artillery in Palestinian territories. These scenes, many of which were not broadcast by U.S. media, have increased Arab sympathy for Palestinians and augmented Arab hatred for Israeli leaders and their policies.

In this sense, it can be argued that Al-Jazeera has united Arabs behind a single issue for the first time since the early 1970s, when Um Kalthoum, the legendary Egyptian diva to whom a magnificent shrine was recently built in Cairo, rallied the Arab world with her stirring monthly radio concerts. Fans from all corners of the Arab world would gather around their radios and TV sets on the first Thursday of every month to listen to her sing. Not since her death in the mid-1970s have Arab audiences been united in watching or listening to any single mass medium. Today, Al-Jazeera's programs and talk shows have the same effect. No matter what they are doing, or where they happen to be, during the time a certain Al-Jazeera program is aired, Arab viewers drop everything and rush to watch. On the day Um Kalthoum's \$1.2 million museum was opened, a fifty-nine-year-old fan, Mohammed Abdel Ghani, was quoted in a December 28, 2001, BBC interview as saying that "she united us as Arabs, she united our souls." In more ways than one, it can be said that Al-Jazeera has done the same with its news coverage.

Al-Jazeera's coverage of the Palestinian uprising ignited pro-Palestinian demonstrations throughout the Middle East. But when the network broadcast opinions from Arabs calling on their leaders to do more for Palestinians, Arab governments reacted swiftly, accusing the network of inciting violence. Several Arab governments, including Egypt and Jordan, stated that Al-Jazeera's coverage of the uprising threatened the stability of their regimes and exposed them to criticism by their own people. In

fact, Egypt and Jordan have been more critical of Al-Jazeera than has Israel. The Israeli government could have cause for concern if Al-Jazeera's coverage helps incite Palestinians to riot, yet it continues to allow Al-Jazeera correspondents to operate freely within its borders.

Al-Omary, the network's correspondent in the West Bank, says his portable phone rings around the clock with news tips, many of them from Palestinians in far-flung villages. "The credibility of Al-Jazeera is very high among the Palestinian people because they hear the facts that they didn't hear from any other media—including their own. They trust us," says Al-Omari.

Will this trust truly foster political action? It could happen. The evidence more than suggests that Al-Jazeera's coverage of the Palestinian uprising inspired the Arab populace to pressure their governments to assist war-torn Palestinians. It could have happened with the coverage of the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan. Al-Jazeera at first was the only news network in the world whose correspondents reported right from the heart of the action, from the Afghan cities of Kabul and Kandahar. Al-Jazeera was the first to cover the Afghani refugee camps, and the pictures it transmitted—showing Afghani refugees suffering in camps near the borders with Pakistan—elicited Arab anger against the U.S. military.

And even though the Western news media have devoted enormous amounts of airtime to cover the plight of the Afghans, their suffering through decades of war, and the harsh strictures imposed by the Taliban regime, it is difficult to tell whether their coverage of the U.S. humanitarian aid campaign has had any impact in the Arab world. If the war for public opinion in the Gulf states is any indication, prospects are dim for a rush of converts to the U.S. point of view. On the contrary, experts say the United States has been unable to explain and highlight the goals of its humanitarian campaign to a widely hostile and suspicious

audience focused on casualties rather than the humanitarian aspect. According to Michael Hudson, an expert in Arab issues at Georgetown University, the United States needs to run "a more believable" humanitarian campaign. "It has to do a lot more than dropping a few pallets from an airplane," said Hudson during a recent interview with the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Al-Jazeera first realized it had the ability to consolidate Arab audiences when it covered the DESERT FOX U.S. military operation against Iraq in 1998. As with the conflict in Afghanistan, Al-Jazeera was the only network on the ground in Iraq at the onset of the bombing. From that point forth, footage from the raids and extensive discussions of the sanctions on Iraq fed Arab fury. The UN-sanctioned economic embargo seemed, in a word, unjustified. Al-Jazeera strengthened its position as the news network of choice two years later when it provided on-the-ground coverage of the Intifada.

### AL-JAZEERA AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

In the United States and Europe, where political and social policies are openly debated, the powerful media conglomerates and their programming can advance civil rights. In the United States, enormously popular TV programs and talk shows like *Politically Incorrect*, *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, and the *Late Night Show with David Letterman* regularly address ills and issues in American society, albeit under the guise of comedy, wit, and humor.

It is vastly different throughout the Middle East. There, a population of 300 million, the majority of them young and living in very strict societies, dreams of liberation, of basic freedoms. Half that population is illiterate, ruled by governments whose top priority is to stay in power, to keep control at any cost. Somehow, given the different Arab societies—some more open, others tightly closed—Al-Jazeera was launched, and it appears that a previously untapped audience was discovered as well.

Al-Jazeera has provided the new Arab audience with so-called interstate representation of civil rights and liberties. One of the civil liberties promoted by Al-Jazeera has been the empowerment of Arab women to exercise their right to seek and receive information and ideas. For example, one of Al-Jazeera's programs, *Akhbar Riyadiyya* (Sports News), has devoted several episodes to the role of Arab women in sports and highlighting the championships that have been won by various female sports figures. Moreover, Al-Jazeera programs have made it possible for Arab women from Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, and Yemen to witness the developments and impact of women's movements in other parts of the world, including the Arab world.

Al-Jazeera has immense potential for Arab viewers, as a forum for the exchange of thoughts and ideas, as a means to gain a public platform for development and empowerment, and as a medium for education that overcomes barriers of distance and time. Al-Jazeera is an ideal venue for enhancing civil liberties among the Arab community scattered across the globe.

### AL-JAZEERA AND THE CONSPIRACY THEORY

Our story of Kamal Helal, living in Halifax, Nova Scotia is emblematic of a generation of Arab citizens whose distrust of the state of Israel is so great that all ill that befalls the Arab world is related to an Israeli state-sponsored conspiracy to dissolve Arab unity and wreck havoc in the Middle East. Kamal's suspicion that the U.S. media are an instrument of Zionist propaganda is part of that distrust. Whether it is the introduction of HIV into Arab countries neighboring Israel, or the abundance of illicit drugs on Arab streets, Israel is always thought to be a mastermind of such ailments.

The same social problems exist tenfold on the streets of New York City; in fact they exist everywhere to some degree. But this Zionist conspiracy theory has become such an obsession that al-



most every tribulation is blamed on Israel. Some of the press in Egypt, for instance, has reported that HIV-positive tourists cross the border from Israel to Egypt and intentionally infect Egyptians with AIDS in an attempt to infiltrate and disrupt the state. Others have reported that drugs are intentionally distributed by Israeli drug lords to destroy Arab youth. As wild as these ideas sound, many Arabs find them believable and convincing.

Thus conspiracy theories prevail among Arab societies. Unlike in the West, where such theories today are the preserve of alienated fringe elements, they enjoy widespread mainstream popularity in the Middle East. They flourish on the street, in the palace, and everywhere between. In order to understand the Middle East, Western and other societies will need to recognize the distorting lens of conspiracy theories, make allowances for them, and perhaps even plan around them.

Within the context of this theory, many Arabs believe that all suffering in the Arab world has been a result of a grand plan hatched by Britain and France after World War II, with the United States as an ally and perpetuated by Israel—the pampered U.S. protégé—for more than five decades. Thus there is a general thinking among the average Middle Easterner that the West is conspiring against the Arab and Islamic world and that there is a Zionist plot planned by the United States and Israel to stop any kind of development in Arab and Islamic countries.

Conspiracy provides a key to understanding the political culture of the Middle East. It pervades life, from the most private family conversations to the highest and most public levels of politics. It helps explain much of what would otherwise seem illogical or implausible, including the region's record of political extremism and volatility, its culture of violence, and its poor record of modernization. The conspiracy mentality also extends beyond the region, skewing the way outsiders see the Middle East and fostering conspiracy thought in other parts of the world.

Since the beginning of the U.S. war on terrorism in Afghanistan, much talk among the U.S. media has focused on how the United States plans to win it, not on any Arab or Muslim angle. Yet the images of demonstrators around the Muslim world burning effigies of U.S. President George W. Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon that filled news-casts told a different story. Many of the Muslims and Arabs demonstrating against the U.S. campaign believed there was little evidence to incriminate Osama bin Laden for the September 11 attacks and that this new U.S. action was an attack against Islam. Despite the U.S. government's release of the videotape of bin Laden on December 13, 2001—in which he discussed his plan for taking down the World Trade Center and which seemed to provide definitive self-incriminating evidence—some Arabs remain unconvinced of his culpability. In addition to the culture of conspiracy theories, it is difficult for many Arab moderates to accept that the perpetrators of such heinous crimes sprang from their religious, national, or ethnic ranks.

Thus for many who demonstrate against the U.S. military action in Afghanistan, virtually any other explanation seems more plausible than the one provided by the U.S. administration. The Zionist conspiracy theory is perhaps the most popular and pervasive.

Just a few minutes' chat with an average Middle Easterner makes it clear how public issues are filtered through the prism of conspiracy. The conspiracy thinking promotes distorted explanations for myriad events and crises that have occurred in recent history. It would appear to them that the Western powers built up Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, colluded with him to design OPERATION DESERT STORM, and even provided him with the weapons to stay in power after his "defeat"—all for the purpose of gaining control over oil resources in the Gulf. By extension, some believe that the late Iranian religious leader, Ayatollah

Ruhollah Khomeini, who appeared anti-Western, actually served the British and U.S. governments right up to his death.

Before the United States undertook the war on terrorism and the strikes on Afghanistan, a popular belief in the Arab world was that the September 11 attacks were not the work of Osama bin Laden and Islamic extremists. Instead, it was a plot by Israel and Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, to discredit Arab and Islamic countries. In the days following the attacks, the Arab press reported that 4,000 Jews employed in the World Trade Center had been tipped off not to go to work that day. Entire websites have been dedicated to explaining how the pieces of the conspiracy puzzle come together. One website that propagated such twisted explanations and was widely circulated on Arab list-servers ("Exposing the 11th September Lies," located at <http://11september.20m.com/>), provides a substantial collection of incoherent, disjointed, and unsubstantiated news pieces, some fabricated, in an attempt to connect the September 11 attacks to Israel and Mossad.

In fact, some allegations have gone so far as to accuse Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of being the mastermind of the attacks on New York and Washington. Given that Sharon is perceived as a war criminal in the Middle East, it is not far-fetched for the Arab public to believe such nonsense. With his heavy-handed approach toward Israeli security and frequent incursions into Palestinian-controlled territories, along with a past that Arabs see as horrific, Sharon has become the arch-nemesis. He has been the target of satirical TV programming (one called *Tales of Terror*, broadcast on Kuwaiti and Abu Dhabi TV networks during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, depicted Sharon as a pale-faced, blood-drinking killer). Such programs, and the daily political cartoons that fill the Arab press, are consistent in representing Sharon as a terrorist. One joke that circulated among Arab online discussion boards reflected the Israeli

conspiracy, suggesting that Sharon had prior knowledge of the September 11 attacks:

*Sharon calls up George W. Bush.*

**Sharon:** Oh, President Bush, I send my condolences. The Israeli people share your pain. This is a terrible, terrible tragedy that has happened, and we sympathize with your grief. Words cannot begin to describe the horror of this act.

**Bush:** Excuse me, but, what are you talking about?

**Sharon:** Oh, damn, I forgot about the seven-hour time-zone difference.

Such allegations of a vast Jewish conspiracy, silly and ridiculous as they are, continue to circulate in the Arab world, although they are less popular now following the broadcast of the incriminating bin Laden videotapes. Many forget that Jews and Israelis died in the twin towers, along with Muslims, Christians, and others of many different heritages.

For some time, some Arabs and Muslims were in denial that members of their faith, ethnicity, or nationality could have committed such heinous acts. This may be one reason why some were quick to blame Israel instead of acknowledging the perpetrators were possibly members of their own constituencies. With bin Laden's culpability now established by his own words, some have come to recognize how much the September 11 attacks—not to mention the unreasonable denials of Arab involvement—have hurt the global image of Arabs and Muslims.

Yet incredible as it may seem, when Al-Jazeera televised the videotape of bin Laden saying the World Trade Center and the Pentagon had been "hit by God in one of its softest spots . . . thank God for that," it changed only a few minds in the Arab world still clinging to the conspiracy theory. "No Arab has the necessary technology to make such a broadcast," an Egyptian

lawyer says about the bin Laden tape. "Mubarak, King Abdullah, all of them know that Mossad did it, so that America could be goaded to destroy the Palestinians, and so that the world's eyes would be closed to the Palestinians' fate." Several of Al-Jazeera's talk-show hosts have been trying to counter such absurd assumptions by ridiculing the conspiracy theories spreading among Arab peoples since the September 11 attacks. For example, during the November 20, 2001, episode of the Al-Jazeera's talk show *The Opposite Direction*, one of the guests, an Arab intellectual, accused the United States of planning to close down the Al-Jazeera bureau in Qatar because, according to him, the U.S. administration is afraid of the network. The program's host, Faisal Al-Kasim, discredited his guest's claim and asked, "Why make these allegations against America, when you don't have concrete evidence?"

Al-Jazeera was accused of inciting violence in the Middle East by showing footage of Palestinian casualties in the ongoing Intifada. The same Arab audiences that accused Al-Jazeera of inciting violence also accused it of being pro-Israeli and of betraying the Arab cause by hosting senior Israeli officials on talk shows. Some people went so far as to accuse the network of collaborating with Mossad and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. "I am very suspicious of Al-Jazeera's intentions. It is not really a free channel. It is allying with Israel and the United States to portray the Arabs in a negative way," says an Arab American in Baltimore.

According to Judith Kipper, director of the Middle East program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, "It is always the Arab answer to say that it [Al-Jazeera] is conspiring against the Arabs. It is easy to say, but it is a different story to really evaluate the effect of Al-Jazeera, which is a free channel operating in one of the most limited regions in terms of freedom of expression."

On the other side, U.S. officials have accused Al-Jazeera of collaborating with the Taliban leadership because it was initially the only network allowed in Kabul. Moreover, Al-Jazeera has been called the mouthpiece for Osama bin Laden, especially after the network aired bin Laden's tape on October 7, 2001. Ironically, this recalls the role CNN played in the 1991 Gulf War, when CNN correspondent Peter Arnett was, initially, the only Western correspondent in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad. Alone, Arnett had the opportunity to cover the damage that the Coalition bombing caused within the city. Given some of the more farcical aspects of his coverage (the infamous "Baby Milk Factory" episode among them), Arnett, who indeed was in a unique position, was criticized by U.S. officials, other media, and viewers alike.

#### **AL-JAZEERA AND ITS FANS IN NORTH AMERICA**

Al-Jazeera's rise to prominence following its scoops in Afghanistan and its broadcasts of the bin Laden tapes may help it expand far beyond the Arab-speaking world. The network's list of nearly 200,000 subscribers in the United States and Canada is growing by 2,500 weekly, according to managing director Jasim Al-Ali. The network already has an Arabic-language website ([www.aljazeera.net](http://www.aljazeera.net)) that reaches even more users than viewers. Most of the 300,000 daily hits on the Al-Jazeera website originate from North America, according to Al-Ali.

For many Arabs living in the United States, Al-Jazeera is their main source of news about home countries. "I watch it almost daily," says Fuad Ateyeh, a businessman living in San Francisco. "I watch Al-Jazeera and CNN—but I get more coverage from Al-Jazeera." Ateyeh is one of 150,000 U.S. subscribers who pay \$22.99 per month to receive Al-Jazeera on Echostar's DISH Network, the Colorado-based distributor of Al-Jazeera programming in the United States.

Another Al-Jazeera viewer, Nadia Semia, says she watches Al-Jazeera programs and talk shows religiously. "I watch Al-Jazeera at my friends' house, and I like its programs because they reflect an honest and straightforward picture of what is going on in the Arab world. I plan to buy the dish, just to watch Al-Jazeera," says Semia, a Moroccan living in Baltimore. Yasser Ahmed, an Egyptian American also residing in Baltimore, says he watches Al-Jazeera on a regular basis. "Al-Jazeera is the only Arab channel that provides me with true news about the Middle East in general and my home country, Egypt, in particular; I wish all the other Arab channels were that brave," he says. And Ghassan Dib, a Palestinian American who lives in Montgomery, Alabama, says the twenty-five Arab families living there depend on Al-Jazeera for news about the Intifada. "I don't know what we would do without it," says Dib, a used-car salesman.

Several Arab coffee shops around the United States have installed satellite dishes so customers can watch Al-Jazeera. The owner of an Arab café in Southern California says that many patrons subscribe to Al-Jazeera at home but come to his café to sip tea or Turkish coffee, watch the news, and discuss the day's events with friends.

The main reason for Al-Jazeera's growing popularity among Arab viewers in North America undoubtedly relates to the cultural connection that the community has re-created on Western soil. The perception of serious uncensored coverage of Arab and world events, presented by Arab anchors and announcers and packaged in a familiar style, helps nurture this sense of Arab community. Part of the Arab tradition is to argue and discuss issues passionately. In the Middle East, where political debate is often limited to the private spheres of the home and places of prayer, Al-Jazeera has projected closed-door discussions via satellite worldwide, an act seen by many as one of courage and

defiance. Showing an Iraqi dissident denouncing Saddam Hussein, or a Palestinian and Kuwaiti debating the effects of the Gulf War, are interpreted as extremely radical acts. Al-Jazeera has expanded the Arab tradition of debate and discourse. It has debunked many Middle East sacred cows and is unflinching in its evenhanded coverage of Arab world news. For expatriate Arab viewers, Al-Jazeera, with its in-depth analysis of Middle East issues and integration of Middle East histories, is superior to any U.S. news network.

The Arab-language companion website to Al-Jazeera was launched in 1998. Like many popular Internet sites that accompany new TV programs, *aljazeera.net* allows users to view live programming through streaming video at no charge. The largest number of visitors to *aljazeera.net* comes from Arabic speakers residing in the United States. The website has recently recorded up to 1.2 million daily hits since September 11, increasing to 3 million hits daily by the second week of strikes on Afghanistan, 40 percent of which came from Arab Americans. Furthermore, the website provides complete, uncondensed coverage, supplemented with complete transcripts of all talk shows that can be read and obtained at no charge. The huge numbers of satellite viewers and website users suggest that mainstream Middle Easterners have grown more accepting of progressive ideas and genuine debate.

Al-Jazeera correspondent Jamal Demiloj told reporter Ned Parker in a *Christian Science Monitor* article that "Al-Jazeera provides a space of freedom to the Arab viewer. Before, Arabs didn't have any idea of media freedom." One of the reasons Al Jazeera appeals to the Arab masses throughout North America boils down to economics. "We are beamed freely on air," says Ahmed Sheikh, a program editor. You just have to own a \$300 satellite dish. The power is simple, according to Sheikh: "When you talk about things considered taboo in the past, it encourages

people to be more open-minded and courageous about issues. When we talk about human rights violations, we are instructing them that they have basic human rights that they need to stand up for." According to Farouk Al-Kassem, a journalist at Al Jazeera, "The people are hungry and thirsty to express themselves."

In an interview conducted by Stephen Wu, published in the fall 1999 issue of *Harvard International Review*, Mohammed Jasim Al-Ali adds, "We have only one of two choices, to win the government or to win the audience."

### **PUBLIC DISCOURSE**

In some of the most totalitarian states—Syria, Iraq, Sudan, and Libya—there is virtually no freedom of the press. In others, state censorship of the news is loosening. In Jordan and Egypt, an opposition press of sorts has emerged with official consent, but even they hew to the official line on the major issues and often make for very dull reading. Lebanon was the only state where Arabs experienced a free press until Syria imposed its control in the last year of the 1975–1990 civil war.

A decade ago, all typewriters in Iraq had to be registered with the authorities. Today, the authorities are easily outmaneuvered by an international phoneline or satellite antenna. Many Arabs still lack such luxuries. Politics has always been the exclusive province of the middle and higher class. Faisal Al-Kasim adds, "The media can be a catalyst in the process of democratization. The dirt in our society has been swept under the carpet for too long."

The press in the Arab world is getting bolder and affecting the political culture of the region, which brings to mind the role that journalists have played in democratizing other areas of the world. Al-Kasim and colleagues have set in motion an insistence on international standards of press freedom in their own coun-

tries. They are learning from recent history. Middle East states can learn from those journalists pushing for democracy and freedom of speech.

The formula that Al-Jazeera's editorial and managerial boards adopt is built on recognizing what Arabs find important. Saddam Hussein played the Palestine card in his attempt to win Arab public support in the early 1990s. Osama bin Laden attempted the same in the fall of 2001. The Palestinian Intifada—the single-most pervasive and persistent issue in the Arab world—has been Al-Jazeera's most frequently covered news topic. Whether Al-Jazeera frames the Intifada as a consequence of Israeli or Palestinian aggression is unimportant. Instead, Arab audiences remain passionate about the Intifada, and that passion drives Al-Jazeera's coverage: Supply meets demand.

Al-Jazeera's role in this context is built on its ability to air contending ideas and issues. When the Palestinian Intifada is openly discussed in the public sphere, as with any democratic issue, it is less likely that any radical position will prevail. The lunatic militants in the Middle East today are a product of decades of suppressed expression and forced silence. Moderate voices that employ rational thought and discourse can do more than displace psychotic beliefs and extreme actions. They can help create a vibrant civil society.

Broadcasting Center (MBC) of an Arab satellite channel owned by the brother-in-law of Saudi Arabia's King Fahd; it is a twenty-four hour news channel in Arabic to compete directly with Al-Jazeera, known now as the Al-Arabiya channel. It was launched in time for the war in Iraq. The new channel did compete with Al-Jazeera, especially when Al-Jazeera's news center in Baghdad was bombed.

Before Al-Arabiya's launch, MBC's director claimed in an interview with the *Washington Post* that "Al-Jazeera has dominated the scene for the last six or seven years. We're trying to provide an alternative." The launch of Al-Arabiya provides a measure of proof that that Al-Jazeera has enhanced public discourse in the Middle East. Another competitor is the refurbished and repackaged Abu Dhabi TV channel.

In a way, Al-Jazeera reflects the contradictions of its programming. Remember its motto: "the opinion and the other opinion." We acknowledge that the network is a force for democracy in the Middle East, but we should also point out its visible shortcomings. Even though Al-Jazeera sometimes falls short of its ambitious goals, it remains the most viable network of its kind in the region. Al-Jazeera has revolutionized the Arab Middle East, challenging censorship imposed by the government-controlled media and addressing any relevant issue, including weak democratic institutions, fundamentalism, state corruption, political inequality, and human rights violations.

Al-Jazeera may not be perfect, but it remains the first choice for Arab self-determination, political openness, and democracy. What the Arab world needs now are more media services like Al-Jazeera, not fewer. And so we close with a fitting expression, something of a personal proverb for an unsettled age: The only cure for what ails democracy is more of it.

## NOTES

Except as noted, statements quoted in this book are from personal interviews or from presentations attended by the authors. Many of our citations are to Arabic publications, which we have transliterated.

### CHAPTER 2

- Page 28 Yosri Fouda, "Al-Jazeera: Here We Stand; We Can Do No Otherwise," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Fall 2001.
- Page 28 Ali Al-Hail, "Civil Society in the Arab World: The Role of Transnational Broadcasting," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Spring 2000.
- Page 29 Tawfik Mahroos, personal interview, November 15, 2000.
- Page 30 Douglas Boyd, International Center Against Censorship Seminar, Cairo, February 1999.
- Page 32 Joseph Straubhaar, "Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Asymmetrical Interdependence and Cultural Proximity," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 1991, 8 (1).
- Page 32 Marwan Kraidy, "Transnational Television and Asymmetrical Interdependence in the Arab World: The Growing Influence of the Lebanese Satellite Broadcasters," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Fall/Winter 2000.
- Page 32 Yosri Fouda, "Al-Jazeera: Here We Stand; We Can Do No Otherwise," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Fall 2001.
- Page 33 Ali Al-Hail, "Civil Society in the Arab World: The Role of Transnational Broadcasting," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Spring 2000.
- Page 34 Hafez Al-Mirazi, personal interview, July 20, 2001.
- Page 40 Christian Miller, "Arab Satellite TV Station a Prime Battlefield in Information War," *New York Times*, October 12, 2001.
- Page 41 Hafez Al-Mirazi, personal interview, July 20, 2001.
- Page 41 S. Abdallah Schleifer, "A Dialogue with Mohammed Jasim Al-Ali, Managing Director, Al-Jazeera," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Fall 2000.
- Page 43 "Egyptian TV Fights Arab Rivals with Tepid Glasnost: A Plethora of Political Debates, Talk Shows, and Social Comment Is Now on Air After Years of Drab Propaganda," Reuters, June 6, 2001.
- Page 43 Ibid.
- Page 43 Ibid.

### CHAPTER 3

- Page 46 Abdullah Al-Hajj, personal interview, November 10, 2001

- Page 47 S. Abdallah Schleifer, "A Dialogue with Mohammed Jasim Al-Ali, Managing Director, Al-Jazeera," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Fall 2000.
- Page 47 "Kaifa Yanzor Al Ra'y Al Aam Al-Arabi Wal Ajnabi Ila Qanat Al-Jazeera?" *Al-Sharq*, November 20, 2000.
- Page 48 "Qanat Al-Jazeera Al Akthar Horreyya Baina Al-Fadaeiyat Al-Arabia," *Al-Watan*, May 5, 2000.
- Page 49 "Istida'a Al-Jazeera," *Al-Watan*, May 17, 1997.
- Page 49 Muhammed I. Ayish, "American-Style Journalism and Arab World Television: An Exploratory Study of News Selection at Six Arab World Satellite Television Channels," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Spring/Summer 2001.
- Page 50 Brian Whitaker, "Battle Station," *The Guardian*, October 9, 2001.
- Page 50 Jian Al-Jacuby, "Interview with 'Inside Al-Jazeera,'" *60 Minutes II*, CBS, October 10, 2001.
- Page 51 Dan Williams, "A Real Newsmaker," *Jerusalem Post*, September 2, 2001.
- Page 52 Brian Whitaker, "Battle Station," *The Guardian*, October 9, 2001.
- Page 52 Frank Viviano, "Arab World Glued to TV Sets—Streets Appear Calm but Anger at U.S. Lies under Surface," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 8, 2001.
- Page 52 Walid Al-Omary, Interview with *60 Minutes*, CBS, May 2001.
- Page 53 S. Abdallah Schleifer, "A Dialogue with Mohammed Jasim Al-Ali, Managing Director, Al-Jazeera," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Fall 2000.
- Page 54 Sharon Waxman, "Arab TV's Strong Signal: The Al-Jazeera Network Offers News the Mideast Never Had Before, and Views That Are All Too Common," *Washington Post*, December 4, 2001.
- Page 54 Ibid.
- Page 56 "Shrine to Legendary Egyptian Diva," *BBC Online News*, December 28, 2001.
- Page 57 Walid Al-Omary, Interview with *60 Minutes*, CBS, May 2001.
- Page 58 Francine Kiefer and Ann Scott Tyson, "In War of Words, U.S. Still Lags Behind," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 17, 2001.
- Page 63 Frank Viviano, "Arab World Glued to TV Sets—Streets Appear Calm but Anger at U.S. Lies under Surface," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 8, 2001.
- Page 64 Arab American citizen in Baltimore, personal interview, July 30, 2001.
- Page 64 Judith Kipper, personal interview, July 15, 2001.
- Page 65 Jonathan Curiel, "Mideast News Network Has Fans Here: Al-Jazeera Coverage Uniquely Censored," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 18, 2001.
- Page 66 Nadia Semia, personal interview, July 30, 2001.
- Page 66 Yasser Ahmed, personal interview, July 30, 2001.
- Page 66 Davan Maharaj, "How Tiny Qatar Jars Arab Media," *Los Angeles Times*, May 7, 2001.
- Page 66 Ibid.
- Page 67 Ned Parker, "Tiny Qatar Beams Big Signal to Arab World," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 4, 1999.
- Page 67 Ibid.
- Page 68 Ibid.
- Page 68 Stephen Wu, "This Just In: Qatar's Satellite Channel," *Harvard International Review*, Fall 1999.
- Page 68 Faisal Al-Kasim, personal interview, December 2, 2001.

#### CHAPTER 4

- Page 73 Mary Anne Weaver, "Democracy by Decree," *New Yorker*, November 20, 2000.
- Page 74 Ibid.
- Page 77 "Qatar," 2000 *World Press Freedom Review*.
- Page 77 Ibid.
- Page 79 Mary Anne Weaver, "Democracy by Decree," *New Yorker*, November 20, 2000.

- Page 80 Agence France Presse, February 29, 2000
- Page 82 *Al-Watan Online*, February 25, 2000.
- Page 83 *Al-Watan*, December 5, 1997.
- Page 84 Faisal Al-Kasim, personal interview, December 2, 2001.
- Page 85 Qatari student, personal interview, November 19, 2001.
- Page 85 Abdullah Al-Hajj, personal interview, November 10, 2001.
- Page 86 Mohammed Arafa, personal interview, November 22, 2001.
- Page 89 Ali Al-Hail, "Civil Society in the Arab World: The Role of Transnational Broadcasting," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Spring 2000.

#### CHAPTER 5

- Page 93 Tony Karon, "The War for Muslim Hearts and Minds." *Time*, November 6, 2001.
- Page 94 Zev Chafets, "Al-Jazeera Unmasked: An Arab Propaganda Machine in the Guise of Real Journalism," *New York Daily News*, October 14, 2001.
- Page 94 Fouad Ajami, "What the Muslim World is Watching," *New York Times*, November 18, 2001.
- Page 97 Faisal Al-Kasim, "Crossfire: The Arab Version," *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, Summer 1999.
- Page 104 Ibid.
- Page 104 S. Abdallah Schleifer, "A Dialogue with Mohammed Jasim Al-Ali, Managing Director, Al-Jazeera," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Fall 2000.
- Page 105 "Ala Hamesh Hewar Dr. Al-Kasim," *Al-Watan*, May 17, 1999.
- Page 108 Yosri Fouda, "Al-Jazeera: Here We Stand; We Can Do No Otherwise," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Fall 2001.
- Page 111 Stephen Wu, "This Just In: Qatar's Satellite Channel," *Harvard International Review*, Fall 1999.

#### CHAPTER 6

- Page 114 Douglas A. Boyd, personal interview, December 22, 2001.
- Page 115 Hafez Al-Mirazi, personal interview, July 20, 2001.
- Page 115 Nail Al-Jubeir, personal interview, July 21, 2001.
- Page 116 Al-Jazeera, March 14, 1998.
- Page 116 Al-Jazeera, January 7, 1999.
- Page 117 Al-Rai Al-Aam, February 3, 2000.
- Page 117 Sheikh Hamad bin Jasim Al-Thani, "Interview with 'Inside Al-Jazeera.'" *60 Minutes II*, CBS, May 2001.
- Page 118 Shaheen Sehbai, "Prince Abdullah Vents Fury at Al-Jazeera," *Al-Anwar*, January 17, 2002.
- Page 119 David Hirst, "Al-Jazeera, the Arab TV Channel that Dares to Shock: Qatar Calling," *Le Monde*, August 15, 2000.
- Page 120 "Barnamej Televesiouni Siasi Qatari Yotheer Ihtujajan Kuwaitiyyan," *Al-Watan*, July 15, 1999.
- Page 120 Al-Siyassah, August 15, 1999.
- Page 123 "Qatar," 1999 *World Press Freedom Review*.
- Page 123 S. Abdallah Schleifer, "A Dialogue with Mohammed Jasim Al-Ali, Managing Director, Al-Jazeera," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal*, Fall 2000.
- Page 124 Qatar News Agency, May 2, 2000.
- Page 125 "Controversial TV Channel Receives Protest Message from Baghdad." Agence France Presse, May 2, 2000.
- Page 126 "Jordanian Government Halts Accreditation of Qatari Satellite Station." *Arabian News Online*, November 10, 1998.