

**TRANSLATION AND CENSORSHIP
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JORDAN**

By

Mohammad Qasem Al-Hamad

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DECLARATION

I, THE UNDRSIGNED, HEREBY DECLARE THAT THIS
THESIS IS WRITTEN BY MYSELF AND ANY
REFERENCES MADE TO OTHER SOURCES ARE DULY
ACCREDITED

Mohammad Qasem Al-Hamad

Abstract

Although studies of censorship in the literary and legal fields can be found, those dealing with censorship and translation in the West are very few. In the Arab world, the situation is no different from that of the West. Studies of censorship are rarely found and probably those dealing with censorship and translation are non-existent. This very fact itself shows the subtle ways in which censorship works.

The thesis presents a range of issues that illustrate censorship. These include, a general history of censorship which aims at understanding how censorship works; defining it; knowing what is censored and why; tracing the changes in the forms of censorship, its impact on people, and its influence on the translated media and literature. Four translations are taken as case studies for this thesis. Only one is translated into English; the rest are translated into Arabic. They consist of two political works (a book and a political document), one novel, and one play. These were chosen as examples of the three main areas of censorship: politics (the state), religion and morals. An attempt is made to analyse these four case studies at macro and micro levels with the support of illustrations.

The thesis benefits from interviews carried out during field research in Jordan between June and September 1999. Among the interviewees were politicians, journalists, a Judge, the Christian member of the Board of Censors in the Department of Press and Publication (DPP), and artists. The thesis also benefits from an unpublished confidential document of books in Arabic banned between 1955 and 1987.

DEDICATION

*For my mother and father
For my wife and my two little angels:
Suffanah & Qasem
with much love*

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All praise to Allah Almighty, the Omniscient.

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KEY TO TRANSLITERATION

(a) Consonants	
ء	'
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ
ع	'
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
هـ	h
و	w
ي	y
ة	a, except in contrast state (iḍāfa) when it is <i>at</i>

(b) Short vowels		
<i>fatḥa</i>	َ	a
<i>kasra</i>	ِ	i
<i>ḍamma</i>	ُ	u

(c) Long vowels		
<i>fatḥa and alif</i>	ا	ā
<i>kasra and yā'</i>	ي	ī
<i>ḍamma and wāw</i>	و	uu

(d) Diphthongs	
<i>fatḥa and yā'</i>	ay
<i>fatḥa and waw</i>	aw

CHAPTER ONE

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Aim and scope of the study

When I asked my father one day in 1987, “Why do journalists telephone you and ask for a permission to publish this and that news?” his answer was “Because it is my job”. A very brief and straightforward answer which meant that my father would not say more. Unsatisfied though I was, I had to live with this brief answer for some time. The question, however, never left my mind; rather, it became more irritating. The events of April 1989 in southern Jordan¹ gave me an opportunity to readdress the question, especially when very many journalists and TV correspondents showered us at home with telephone calls of enquiry. I asked my father,

Why are they asking for permission? And why is the JTV news bulletin version of the events of 1989 different from the video that you recorded?

He said,

In these circumstances the *security* of Jordan is what matters. The news about the events *must be approved* by the Directorate of Moral Guidance. The video you saw at home about the events is the same we gave to JTV but with *some modifications* we thought *necessary*.

The question of censorship was enhanced by my work in Jordan Television (JTV) as a translator of news and films. There I became familiar with the rules of censorship. Looking back some ten years later, it seems that I was destined to write about censorship. Perhaps my interest in censorship stemmed from my personal experience of ten years (1987–1997) of how one of the main censors in Jordan lived for his work

¹ The events of April 1989 in Southern Jordan were a protest against raising the price of fuel and public transport charges.

and from my own work in JTV. When I interviewed my father in 1999, as the Director of the Directorate of Moral Guidance, and asked him about the 1989 events and whether nowadays permission was still needed in democratic Jordan, he said, “The necessity to protect the security of the country, any country, never changes over the years”.

Censorship has been a controversial issue over the years. An understanding of how censorship works requires knowledge of its definition, the censors, what is censored, why it is censored and its impact on people. The gathering of information about all the above issues is not an easy task. First, there is no agreement on a definition of censorship because of its fickle nature. Second, the parties concerned with the discussions about or those that apply censorship are usually reluctant to disclose information about it.

Studies of censorship and translation are handicapped by the fact that few works have been written on the subject in the West, although studies of censorship in the literary and legal fields can be found. One example of the studies of censorship and translation is Roman Alvarez & M. Carmen-Africa Vidal’s (1996): *Translation, Power, Subversion*. The shortage of works on censorship and translation, as Suleiman (forthcoming) emphasises, “is reflected in the absence of an entry dedicated to censorship in Mona Baker’s *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies* (1998) ... [which] reflects the current state of affairs of the interest in and research of the concept”. Even the 2001 edition of Baker’s work does not include an entry for censorship.

The Arab world is no different from the West. Studies of censorship are rarely found and probably none has been written on censorship and translation in the Arab world. The same can be said about Jordan, the case study in this research. Choosing Jordan for this purpose out of 22 Arab countries is in itself an example of censorship. Not being able to travel to other Arab countries, even those bordering Jordan, was in itself an act of censorship. Hindered by my father's position in the Jordanian army (the Arab Legion) on the one hand and by the possibility of, in conservative or one-party-regime countries, not disclosing information about sensitive issues on the other hand, I could not travel elsewhere. I therefore had to restrict myself to Jordan as my case study. The choice of Jordan was supported by other reasons also. First, Jordan is my home country. Therefore, my expectations of having access to information were likely to be greater than in any other Arab state. Second, after the reinstatement of democracy in 1989, people are expected, theoretically speaking, to have more freedom in discussing sensitive issues than those in non-democratic countries.

The main concern of the present research is to trace the influence of censorship on the translated media and literature (hereafter, "media" means the written media – newspapers, magazines and the Internet – and the oral media – radio, television, film and video whereas "literature" means drama (theatre) and political books). This is done by studying the historical background to try to discern the definition and nature of censorship in translation, and thus enable the reader to trace its early forms. The historical background is surveyed with an eye to censorship in translation. Examples of how censorship is applied in the media and literature are mentioned throughout the research. A whole chapter – chapter 4 – is dedicated to case studies from the

translated media and literature. The case studies are analysed on a macro and a micro level to illustrate the subtle ways in which censorship works in Jordan.

1.2 Data

Gathering data was the most difficult part of the research. As mentioned above, the intricacy of censorship stems from the people's denial of the very existence of censorship in their societies, and their insistence that it exists only on the other side of the fence or that it is exclusively a modern issue. To be able to collect data and to understand how censorship works, I had to rely on the limited resources available about censorship and translation in the West. As for Jordan, I had to visit the country to meet some of those who are concerned with censorship. It was not possible to discuss the subject on the telephone, by post or e-mail. I had to be present in Jordan because some of the data needed are inaccessible to the public

I therefore depended on the limited resources available: newspapers, TV documentaries, the archives of some interviewees, satellite channels, on one occasion an unpublished confidential document, and, most importantly, on interviews. Interviews constitute a major part of the discussion in chapter 2. I depended heavily on the information provided by the interviewees when discussing censorship in Jordan (27 interviews on 18 cassettes). The list of interviewees consisted of the names of people who had contributed to the socio-political life of Jordan. I divided my interviewees into five categories: politicians, journalists, Judge Tawfiq el-Qaisi, Monsignor Abdul Ra'uf an-Najjar (the Christian member of the Board of Censors in the DPP), and artists.

However, meeting the interviewees proved to be, contrary to my expectations, the most daunting task of all. The interviews created two levels of difficulties. The first level was access to my interviewees, particularly the politicians. The second level of difficulties was lack of references in the archives, or, if available, the difficulty in gaining access to them. When I carried out my research in Jordan in June 1999, I thought that all I needed to do was to telephone the interviewee or his/her secretary to arrange a suitable time, which was not the case. Because the interviews were for academic purposes, it never occurred to me that there would be any reason for the interviewee to be hesitant or unwilling to discuss censorship. However, I had to change my ideas once I started to telephone the politicians, whom I wanted to contact first before their dairies became replete with other commitments. I telephoned them several times, leaving my contact numbers with the secretaries or wives/husbands and emphasising that this was an academic work, I informed them that I had limited time and that I was coming from Scotland. Not one politician telephoned in reply. Nobody, though, said explicitly that he or she was unwilling to be interviewed about censorship in Jordan. Some politicians agreed to be interviewed in the beginning, and then they telephoned to cancel the appointment without giving any reason. Others did not come to the interview nor did they telephone to cancel the appointment or to apologise for the cancellation.

The answer that I was given by the politicians or their staff was: “We are all busy with the pan-Arab Games”, which gave the impression that all the politicians were concerned in one way or another with these games. Unfortunately, from my perspective, the pan-Arab Games were taking place in the summer of 1999. They were dedicated to the memory of His Majesty King Hussein and King Abdullah II

was to attend. However, it was not possible for me to wait until the end of these games in September. Having already spent a month in Jordan, I had to turn to my father for help when he asked me about the progress of my research in one summer evening in July 1999. Once my father intervened, everything changed dramatically and I began to prepare a timetable for the interviews. He had to make the telephone calls for me to arrange some of the interviews. So, although my father's position in the Army prevented me from travelling to some neighbouring Arab countries, it was the main factor that made my interviews in Jordan possible.

As for the artists, they were more helpful and willing to be interviewed. Most of them agreed to be interviewed immediately although some of them had busy agendas. Those whom I could not interview were outside the country. Hisham Yanis, Lina al-Tall and Mohammed al-Shawaqfeh offered their help and support and gave me access to their personal archives. Yanis and al-Shawaqfeh offered me free tickets for their plays and discount vouchers to buy their plays from video shops. Al-Tall, despite her busy agenda as the director of the Nur al-Hussein Foundation, devoted two hours of her time to the interviews.

Some of my interviewees absolutely rejected the idea of being revealed because they were not willing to disclose any information. One interviewee had no problem about being interviewed as long as the interview was not recorded. However, I was given permission to refer to her title and first initial in my research.

In addition to the first level of difficulties mentioned above, the second level of difficulty was the unavailability of references on censorship or censorship in

translation. Even if the references were available in one or two places, it was difficult to gain access to them. Sometimes, as in the original play texts, the references were simply not there. No records were found, either in the National Library of Jordan or in the Jordanian Artists Union. Fortunately though, I obtained one important, unpublished confidential document from a friend, who did not want to disclose his name. The *document* contains the list of the books that were banned in Jordan between 1955 and 1987; most of these banned books were in Arabic or were translations. The *document* consists of 1,248 banned books. Considering the shortage of references, this *document* was very helpful in advancing my argument on censorship in Jordan (chapter 3). I also drew on articles in both English and Arabic newspapers and magazines, television programmes and documentaries, films, cassettes and Internet addresses as shown in the classification of the bibliography below.

The bibliography in the thesis is divided into five sections: references in English, references in Arabic, newspapers and magazines, films, cassettes/albums and television programmes, and Internet addresses. The extensive discussions with and invaluable insights of Professor Yasir Suleiman were very significant in overcoming most of the difficulties in the work and helped in shaping my ideas and understanding of censorship in translations. Professor Suleiman provided me with a number of references from his own library on censorship in translation, particularly case number 2 (chapter 4). I also obtained a number of references on censorship from Dr Paul Lalor's own library.

1.3 The organisation of the thesis

The thesis is divided into five chapters as follows:

Chapter one provides an introduction to the thesis. It highlights the aim and scope of the research and the methodology applied in studying censorship in the translated media and literature. The chapter also gives an idea of the difficulties in carrying out the field research, interviews and collecting data, and finally, the thesis structure in order to provide the reader with a general picture.

Chapter two discusses censorship in the West. It gives a general historical background, which is subdivided into censorship in Athens, Rome, religion, the Church and censorship, censorship in the 1960s, in the film industry, in the 1980s, censorship of video films, and censorship in the 1990s. The chapter also discusses the definitions and forms of censorship, the censors and the rationale behind censorship. It traces the changes in censorship in the theatre from the ancient Greeks to the twentieth century. The chapter discusses censorship in television and the Internet. The main purpose of this chapter is to trace the changes in censorship in the West, define censorship and try to refute the arguments of those who are reluctant to admit its existence and those who argue that it is exclusively a modern issue or that it only exists in undemocratic countries.

Chapter three is the backbone of the study. It provides extensive discussion on censorship in the translated media and literature in Jordan. The chapter describes the field research that I carried out in Jordan and the difficulties that it entailed (gathering data, obtaining permission to access certain places, and conducting

interviews). It provides an overview of censorship and translation in Jordan, its history, nature and definition. The chapter gives a description of the political order and political relationships in Jordan and their influence on the changes in censorship between two periods: the era before 1989 and that after the reinstatement of democracy in 1989. Chapter three describes the developments in the cultural scene: Jordan in the translation movement, the Department of Press and Publication (DPP), JTV and Radio Jordan, the press, the Internet and the theatre. Censorship in theatre is traced over three periods that constitute the history of theatre in Jordan: 1921–1965, 1965–1989 and 1989–2000.

Chapter four discusses four cases studies. One case study is on Arabic – English translation and three are on English – Arabic translations. These case studies are explored and analysed on a macro and micro level. They were chosen intentionally as examples of political, religious and social censorship. The case studies present the reader with the way censorship works in an Arab society. The importance of chapter four stems from the fact that it establishes a link between censorship and translation.

Chapter five highlights the findings, the conclusions drawn from the research and the prospects for future research into the topic.

CHAPTER TWO

Chapter Two: Censorship in the West: the Translated Media and Literature:

1. Introduction

For centuries, the subject of censorship has been a controversial issue. Since ancient times, censorship has involved many complicated issues: political, moral, social, psychological and paternal. The practice of censorship and the various arguments for and against it, show no signs of dwindling in importance in the near future. On the contrary, the discussion has tended to grow in breadth and depth in the course of time. Neither has any clear indication of the definition of censorship been given.

Several factors combine to make censorship an extremely complex matter. Firstly, the innumerable forms censorship takes because of its fickle nature. Secondly, the fact that human behaviour, about which we know very little, and, more specifically, human attitudes and reactions, varies inordinately over time and space. Thirdly, the vast changes that are taking place in all walks of life, which, consequently, impose changes on the meaning, forms and the application of censorship. Moreover, what makes the issue of censorship yet more intricate is that some people deny the very existence of censorship in their societies, and insist that it only exists on the other side of the fence.

The controversy over censorship poses many questions. The most important of which are: who censors what, and why? And what impact does censorship have on people? As might be expected, no one answer can be given to these questions. Any attempt to

answer these questions brings us back to the disparity concerning the definition of the term censorship. Every party involved in the discussion will be ill or well disposed towards one definition or the other. Thus, the matter at stake, at this stage, is how to define censorship.

One essential method of trying to define censorship could be to give an overview of its history. The rationale for adopting the historical approach is very sound. The historical background enables the reader to trace the early forms of censorship and to understand its nature. It is also desirable that the reader be provided with a brief survey of the history of censorship, since the new radical changes in this domain do not invalidate what has previously been written about it. Moreover, the historical background will help to refute arguments of those who are reluctant to admit the existence of censorship and those who argue that censorship is exclusively a modern issue.

However, it should be noted that it is not my intention to give a detailed history of censorship, for two main reasons. First, a detailed history of censorship, or the legal part of censorship, i.e., censorship in law, is beyond the scope of this work, because of the enormous quantity of information involved. Second, this study is not meant to be a study of censorship. It is a study of the impact of censorship in the translated media and literature. The historical background is meant on the one hand to serve the purpose of defining censorship and to trace its changes over time, if it does change, and to highlight key developments in the field of censorship. On the other hand, the historical background is surveyed with an eye to censorship in translation. For

present purposes, the term “media” is used in this thesis to mean the written media – newspapers, magazines and the Internet – and the oral media – radio, television, film, and video. “Literature” is used to mean drama (theatre) and political books. Although this definition of media and literature is enormously wide, the immediate concern of this work is to refer to media and literature as described above whenever these two terms are mentioned hereafter.

2. A General History of Censorship¹

Censorship has a long history behind it. This long history involves all the values that might be found in the history of any nation. It is highly unlikely that any society has existed without customs of its own, traditions, habits, morals, laws of speech, religious beliefs of some kind, taboos and regulations related to sexual expression. The difference between any two societies, however, is the difference in practising or applying these values and this difference usually stems from two reasons. First, values either gain or lose currency or influence over the years. Secondly, the persons applying these values and those practising them are different, since, obviously, no two people are the same.

In other words, there will be people, who fight for principles they believe in, even if they pay with their lives. At the same time, there will be others, in the same society, who oppose those principles and discourage their application. The former group is often referred to as the martyrs or the villains, whereas the latter is often referred to

¹ For more details see Thomas Donald (1969), Fitch (1974), Robertson (1979), Stephens (1980, 1985), and Findlay (1998).

as the guardians or censors in society. In fact, viewing one group as villains or martyrs and the other as guardians or censors is a relative matter that depends on the viewer himself and what bandwagon he decides to jump on. The idea of classifying people as good or villains has been a relative issue relying on the idea of good and evil itself, which goes back to Cain and Abel.

2.1 Censorship in Athens

The long history of censorship can be traced back as far as the Greeks of Athens and Sparta. However, Athens and not Sparta will be the focus of attention here mainly because Athens was the centre of the great Greek civilisation. The masterpieces of the great intellectuals of Athens remained cultural touchstones for centuries to come and were translated into many different languages. Among these great Athenians were poets, playwrights, thinkers and philosophers such as Homer, Aeschylus, Seneca, Aristotle, Anaxagoras, Protagoras, Socrates and Plato, to name but few.

In Athens, freedom of speech was respected by all people and guarded by agreed rules. People of Athens had the right to express themselves openly and privately. However, it is not to be suggested that Athens was, in this respect, the ideal place in the world of that time. There were evident examples of censorship in fact: books were burnt and intellectuals were charged with different kinds of accusation. The philosopher Protagoras, for example, was charged with blasphemy and as a result, his books were burnt. Anaxagoras, another philosopher, was accused of impiety. But the most important example is that of Socrates and Plato. It is important because it represents both sides of Athenian society. Plato was Socrates' disciple. Socrates was

the first to establish a philosophy of the freedom of speech, whereas Plato was in favour of censorship. The dissimilarity between the two resulted in Plato's rejections of Socrates' teachings. Socrates was tried and accused of worshipping strange gods, not recognising the gods of Athens and corrupting the youth.

Plato was the first philosopher to establish a rationale for the application of censorship in religion, morals, art and politics. In Plato's *Republic* poets, such as Homer, "whose writings provided the Bible of the Greeks", to use Fitch's (1974:16) words, were excluded from the ideal world. In Plato's work, it is recommended that musical instruments and tunes were restricted. Even mothers and nurses were not to tell evil stories about gods or to portray them as immoral. Any ill belief about the hereafter was considered a heresy. In other words, the seeds for a comprehensive model of censorship were disseminated in the *Republic*.

Having said this, it seems that life in Athens was not as bleak as might be understood from one reading of Plato's *Republic*. The norm in the Greek civilisation was democracy and freedom of speech. The persecutions and the repression were a deviation from that norm. Had it not been for the high status and importance of the intellectuals who were persecuted, and had it not been for the fact that the sorrows of life are usually remembered more than the moments of happiness, censorship might not have had such an impact in Athens.

Another reading of Plato's *Republic* could be that individuals in any society are not totally free to do as they wish or to impose their views on others. The rules and laws are set to shape peoples way of life, acts and behaviour.

To sum up, censorship was applied in all spheres of life in Athens, especially in the written works of poets, philosophers and playwrights. Freedom of speech was used as the reverse of censorship. Intellectuals' works were strictly censored on moral and social grounds. The punishment was very severe. As far as translation is concerned, examples of censorship in translation are hardly found. It could be because of the long years of war between the Persians and the Greeks. Translations into one culture in wartime activities are usually prohibited.

2.2 Censorship in Rome

In contrast to the Athenians, the public in the Roman Empire did not enjoy the privilege of freedom of speech. To speak freely was a right restricted to men in power. The gap between persons in authority and ordinary members of society was huge. The community in the Roman Empire consisted of nations of diverse cultures and religions. Roman authority adopted a policy of tolerance towards these different nations, probably to keep the long borders of the Roman Empire as calm as possible. The Romans' policy of tolerance proved successful for some time, as is borne out by the long period of their rule, bearing in mind that the Roman Empire lasted for four centuries, the wide-spread Roman Empire, and the many different cultures it included. Yet, the Roman policy of tolerance was not consistent. When their patience

was tested, the Romans' response was severe, especially with respect to matters related to the Emperors' status or the fulfilment of their orders.

Although the diverse nations were free to practice their own rituals and to worship their own gods, the residents, as citizens of the Roman Empire, all had to worship the Emperor first and above all. Failing to comply with this policy would bring on one's person and society different sorts of punishment such as persecutions, banishment, torture and death. Christians, in particular, suffered severely and many of them were killed when they refused to follow the Roman rituals, especially with regard to their refusal to worship the Emperor. The Roman Emperors and authorities were sensitive to criticism. Nero, for example, banished his critics and burnt their books. Other Emperors, such as Caligula, deported or burnt writers and critics alive if he was offended or opposed by them. Among those who were charged with seditious writings and then deported were the famous poets Juvenal and Ovid.²

To sum up, censorship in the Roman Empire had become more severe than it was in the Greeks' times. It not only led to burning books or repressing ideas, it also led to banishment and killing in the most brutal ways: burning people alive. The nature of censorship became more severe, its punishment more deadly and it took more lives. The Roman era saw the establishment of political censorship as the new form of censorship. Morals and religion were less dominant in the early stages of the Roman Empire. It was not until the Romans adopted Christianity as the official religion in their empire in 378 that religion became a dominant concept by which people and

² For more details see Green, 1990.

literary works were censored. The Christian Church continued to play an essential part in all aspects of life even after the Visigoths sacked Rome in A.D.410.³

2.2.1 Religion, the Church and Censorship

If religion played some part in censoring the great works of the intellectuals in Athens, it certainly had a bigger role in the Roman Empire. Although most of the Roman Emperors were not tolerant of different beliefs and wanted their citizens to worship them, a few Emperors behaved otherwise. For example, the honeymoon between the Emperor Constantine and the public in Rome lasted for nearly twenty years before the same Emperor resumed his ancestors' strict censorship once more.

However, after some time, the Roman emperors adopted Christianity in 378 as the official religion in the Empire.⁴ The ultimate authority was the Pope in religious as well as in civil life, i.e., in the church and the government. Thus, it became the responsibility of these two institutions to implement a strict form of censorship against almost anything opposing the Catholic faith or morals. Consequently, the books of some Greek writers, such as Arius, were burnt. Censorship flourished and the Roman authorities, supported by the church, started to persecute people, burn books, and use force to suppress paganism and heresy. The role of the church became more powerful when printing was invented, in the fifteenth century.

³ For more details see (Barnet et al), 1997.

⁴ The first emperor to establish Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire was Theodosius.

From that time on, censorship was expanded to include printed works. It took a preventive form. Every written work had to be approved by the church before printing. The power of the church was invigorated by two factors. First, by instituting the *Inquisition*⁵ and secondly by issuing the *Index*, which included the banned books of the era. Both of them, the *Inquisition* and the *Index*, remained influential for a long time.⁶ Hundreds of thousands of books covering a wide range of topics were listed in the *Index* and were classified as written/translated books not allowed in Catholic Rome. In most cases, books were banned if they contained immoral, superstitious or heretical material: any book that contained insulting material against God, the Virgin Mary, the Church or the Saints. The *Talmud*, for example, and other Jewish books were considered superstitious and were banned, destroyed, burnt or confiscated. Astrological books and the Latin translations of *The New Testament* were banned as well. Censorship was inflicted on those who breached the laws of the church by reading, translating or possessing a banned book. They had to face severe penalties and ecclesiastical punishment.

When the Protestants were in power, they were no exception. They also suppressed any doctrine that opposed theirs. The Protestants were only tolerant with their own followers. By default, from a Protestant point of view, Roman Catholics were disobedient of the right doctrine, the Protestant doctrine in this case, and so they were persecuted. It is interesting to highlight here that in the beginning of their reformation movement, Martin Luther, John Knox and John Calvin called for free

⁵ This is also called the *Congregation of the Holy Office*. Its duty was to examine books before they were printed and to ban the heretical and/or immoral ones.

⁶ The *Inquisition* remained influential for more than five centuries. It was first instituted in 1231. The first issue of the *Index* was in 1559 whereas the last issue was in 1948.

societies and opposed persecution and repressive policies of the Catholic Church. But, once in power, they were no different from any other authority. They applied the same censorship that they fought against.

The Church and religious censorship remained dominant until King Henry VIII of England decided to establish his own church. When his efforts to supplant the Pope proved successful, King Henry VIII stripped the church of its power and declared himself the sole authority to reward followers or to punish his opponents.⁷ King Henry VIII applied a harsh form of censorship in England. As might be expected, the Papists were on the top of his list of persecution. Copies of the Translations of *The New Testament* were burnt as well as other books. King Henry VIII imposed a new licensing system, which dealt with pre-publications, i.e., books were to be sent to the Church to be approved before being published. England faced ecclesiastical supervision of education, morals and religion during the rule of King Henry VIII. The public and many intellectuals, in England, opposed and expressed their anger towards the King's strict rules. In this sense, Milton's *Areopagitica* (1644) was regarded as a scream of wrath against the Church censors and restraints on all aspects of life, especially the arts.

To sum up, religious censorship developed to fit the needs of the times. It was institutionalised and became the essential means of power in the hands of the authorities. It became clearer, more than in any other period, that the ultimate aim of religious or moral censorship was to serve a political purpose. The field of

⁷ This event occurred in 1534 and known in history as *The Act of Supremacy*.

censorship expanded to include the translation of books, and, when printing was invented, it covered all printed works. Pre-publication censorship was the new procedure adopted to control printed material. Despite the changes in power and the different forms the authorities took, Roman, Catholic or Protestant or of King Henry VIII, all were united in applying the same technique of control: censorship. It maintained their grip on power.

2.3 Censorship in the Modern Age⁸

The modern age was the age of freedom, liberty and challenge in arts, religion, politics and science. It was a challenge to the strong censors of authority and the church, which took two forms. Firstly, attempts were made to abolish the pre-publication rule, i.e., keeping the censors from laying any restraint upon writings before they were published. Secondly, trying to stop the authorities or the church from censoring opposing ideas in texts after their publication.

The Reformation movements in modern democratic countries started to bear fruit. Different countries, such as England, America and France issued new laws and applied constitutional changes to keep abreast of the times in the life of the modern age.⁹ The religion of the individual became a private matter, i.e., no government has the right to intrude into its citizens' forms of worship and religion became strictly independent of politics and vice-versa.¹⁰

⁸ The 18th century marked the beginning of the modern age. It was called the Age of Enlightenment

⁹ Some of the new laws are The Bill of Rights of 1689 in England and that of 1789 in America which dealt with personal liberties and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen (1769).

¹⁰ As time progressed, there were exceptions. The extremist exception is the Iranian Islamic Republic (1978–to date), where religion (Islam) is an established ideology. Another extreme exception could be the communist countries, such as USSR, where atheism was the established ideology.

As the strict religious censorship started to fade, writers and journalists enjoyed more freedom, particularly in England. The more publications of books and newspapers increased, the greater the demand became for less censorship. Although the modern age noticed a shift of power from the church to governments, censorship continued to influence all walks of life. However, it took a different form: it was changed into governmental or official censorship instead of religious censorship.

Official censorship was challenged by many changes that were taking place in the world. The cultural impact of new geographical discoveries and scientific inventions, the change in some social systems, the replacement of the feudal system by capitalism, the rise of a new class, the merchants that threatened the position of the nobility, and the rise of new republics in Europe, was influential. It became acceptable, in some countries in Europe, to have a political scene consisting of two or more parties with different political agendas. The arguments against censorship advanced. In England, for example, the opposing groups challenged the official censorship on press in courts and won, in the 18th century, a judicial decision against political oppression on the freedom of press and publication. Gradually, censorship was reduced. In fact, from that time, the eighteenth century, the press played a vital role in society, a role that became greater and greater in the course of time. However, “in the early nineteenth century, the government attempted a form of indirect censorship by imposing a tax on periodicals which restricted their sale amongst the poor” (Williams 1994: 125). The relative freedom of the press or censorship of the

press nowadays enables conclusions to be drawn as to a society's totalitarianism or democracy, regardless of any adjective that might precede the name of the country, e.g., whether it is a liberal, a pluralistic or a democratic country.¹¹ The press has established itself in many countries as a vital and independent institution that does not rely on the political regime in power.

However, in some European countries the political scene was completely different. At the beginning of the twentieth century, many rapid changes took place in different parts of the world which imposed drastic changes that proved to be historical landmarks, having an immediate impact on censorship laws. On the political scene, the changes were massive. The Colonial countries, such as Britain, Italy and France were still in control of the fate of diverse nations, a policy they maintained from the nineteenth century. The Sykes-Picot Agreement divided the Arab world between France and Britain, the two super-powers of the time. Even worse, from the Arabs point of view, in 1917 Balfour, the then British Foreign Secretary, "announced support for the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people" (Lunt 1988: xxii) a promise that was fulfilled in 1948.

In the Eastern parts of Europe, the Bolshevik revolution took place one year before the end of the First World War, and lasted for three crucial years (1917–1920). One of its important results was the establishment of the USSR by Nikolai Lenin (1862–1947), who developed Marxism to meet the needs of the twentieth century. Many

¹¹ In modern France, the land of freedom, liberty and democracy, the French government took *Le Monde* newspaper to court because it published articles about the French courts to the disapproval of the government.

countries in Eastern and central Europe followed in his footsteps and adopted the one-party system of Communism. There was no place for any other party in the political arena.

The one-party system set the laws for publication and circulation of information domestically, as well as in regard to foreign publications.¹² Severe punishment, such as imprisonment, high fines and closure of the publication premises, awaited those who violated the rules. Special attention was given to the translations of foreign books coming into the USSR. The fear of the potential influence of foreign publications was so overwhelming in the USSR that the government applied a postal censorship. By censoring the mail, the USSR authorities controlled the publication of periodicals, magazines, translated books or any other publications sent to or received in the country by post.¹³ Not only written materials were subject to censorship, but also citizens suffered from the application of censorship. Regardless of the reputation they might have, scientist, singers, broadcasters, authors,¹⁴ musicians, even periodical subscribers, were subject to punishment by the government, if they breached the strict laws and regulations of the country.

2.3.1 The Impact of the 1960s

The key years for the changes that occurred in the late 1980s and the 1990s in different parts of the world had their roots in the post-war era, particularly the late

¹² Censorship in the ex-USSR goes back to 1796. For more details on censorship in the ex-USSR see Dewhirst and Farrel (1973) and Chaldin & Friedberg (1989).

¹³ The postal censorship in the Soviet Union was also known as the 'black office'.

¹⁴ Among those authors were Nobel Prize winners in peace and literature, such as Andrey D. Sakharov (1975 – Nobel Peace Prize) and Alexander I. Solzhenitsyn (1970 – Nobel Prize in Literature).

1950s and the 1960s. The progressive aspects of change were overwhelming and beyond the range of traditional social values. Many events and inventions in the 1950s – 1980s had a direct and indirect impact on the public. Probably the most important was the first moon-landing of 1969 and the widespread availability of television.

The fever of change in the ‘swinging sixties’ in British society affected nearly all aspects of life in the rest of Western Europe as well. The evident result of the Cultural Revolution in the sixties was in censorship. The major step towards a release from censorship was taken by liberalising literature and the media. Though it was gradual, the process of liberalisation was consistent. One major breakthrough was in the Parliament’s decision in UK, supported by the House of Commons and the House of Lords, to abolish the power of the Lord Chamberlain’s office over theatre in 1968. There were other decisive achievements, which occurred before decensuring drama. In 1960, D. H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* became available in bookshops without being expurgated, thirty-two years after its first publication. In fact, the trial of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* was a historical event. It was “a great surprise to many in the world of publishing, and the law [as well as a shock to the lovers of English literature]” (Rolph 1961: 2). It was the language Lawrence used in his novel that caused all the trouble, but the immense weight of the novel’s literary excellence and moral purpose was the convincing reason behind the ‘not guilty’ verdict, which was echoed by Mr Justice Byrne’s words addressing the members of the Jury:

“You must not regard yourselves as a board of censors with blue pencil in hand ... therefore the mere fact that you hate the sight of the book when you have read

it, does not solve the question to whether you are satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the tendency of the book is to deprave and corrupt”

(Rolph 1961. 229)

The ‘permissive society’ of the sixties set up new values, such as love, equality and peace that continued to influence the generations of the 1970s and 1990s in particular. These values became crucial: “in forging a new sense of openness in the cinematic and the theatrical exploration of key ‘problematic’ subjects they also highlight[ed] the social, ideological and political forces at work within the shifting terrain of the ‘permissive’”(Aldgate 1995:10). The result of the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s, as far as theatre is concerned, was the works of writers such as John Osborne, Keith Waterhouse and directors such as Lewis Gilbert and Tony Richardson.¹⁵

The inception of television made the work of censors, who were already under fire on several fronts, even more complicated. Governments had to change tactics to live up to the new enormous changes. In fact, governments experienced the consequences of new inventions earlier than 1954. They had to change their tactics and modulate the laws of censorship when cinema was invented in 1890.

2.3.2 Censorship in the Film Industry

The focus here will be mainly on the British film industry for the sake of simplicity and clarity. References to other European countries or America, though, will be made when necessary.

¹⁵ For more details see Anthony Aldgate (1995).

The scene at the turn of the twentieth century was that theatre in Britain was controlled by the power of Lord Chamberlain's office. It had to wait until the 1960s to be freed from that control. Cinema was controlled by the British Board of Censors (BBFC) and the government. However, at that stage, theatres ceased to play the political and social role that they possessed for a long time, "the stage has been overtaken, as a popular entertainment by, respectively, the music halls, the cinema and finally, in the 1960s, by television" (Aldgate 1995: 150).

The freedom that film-makers enjoyed in the 1960s was the result of a long history of suffering endured by the pioneers. It is true that, in the sixties, censorship eased on films and the British Board of Censors (BBFC) was reluctant, especially John Trevelyan – a censor from 1958 to 1971 – to use their blue pencils. The situation of the moving pictures and censors was quite different at the turn of the twentieth century. In fact, when it was first created in 1890,¹⁶ cinema sparked another challenge for the censors. Cinema-going mushroomed in Britain because ticket prices were low. Objections from the authorities and criticism from the press on film contents arose. To protect themselves, because they feared the imposition of the authorities' censorship, the producers, distributors and exhibitors approached the government for the approval of their films. The fear of government censorship led to the formation of the BBFC in 1912. The BBFC consisted of the film industry and an official from the Home Office. So censorship in the cinema started as self-censorship. Before 1912, the *Cinematography Act* of 1909 was passed as "result of

¹⁶ In 1890 Edison and the Lumiere brothers created a machine, which could move the pictures. In Britain the moving films arrived in big cities like London and Manchester in 1896. However, it was not until 1906 that the first purpose-built cinema appeared in Britain. Before that films were shown in circuses. For more details about cinema, see Robertson (1985), Philips (1975) and Schumach (1964).

fears concerning the safety of audiences from the danger of fire ... but the authorities, London Council, seized the opportunity to deal with the fire licenses as the music halls licenses” (Hunnings 1967: 48). Gradually, the authorities established their control over cinemas and what the people in the film industry most feared came true.

The main function of the BBFC, then, was to “either classify... [,] cut or reject the films submitted to it ... [the BBFC also] decided to categorise films with an ‘A’ (adult) or ‘U’ (universal) certificate [for both adults and children] cut or uncut or to withhold the certificate altogether” (Robertson 1989: 1). But the local authorities could both allow a film the BBFC had rejected and ban a film the BBFC had passed. Films were banned by the BBFC on two bases: there was to be no materialisation of Christ and no nudity. This policy of the BBFC was applied on all types of films whether English films (British or American), or any other foreign films: films with translated subtitles from Asia, Denmark, Sweden or Italy.

In the early years of the movie industry, there was no need for any kind of censorship. Cinema consisted of enlarged images or ‘peep shows’ but the expansion of the film industry resulted in the enactment of censorship rules because of its perceived influence on the morality of societies. The more films were made the louder the public’s calls for applying censorship became. In fact, film-makers did not help in easing the tension that was intensified by more “immoral” scenes in the movies. Their films were full of “mini skirts, long kisses, heavy make-up and embraces were more clinging ... [which led to] ... blaming the movie for

undermining morals” (Schumach 1964: 18). In the course of time, the clash of morals eased as the attitudes of people changed.

The main issues of censorship in cinema were violence, religion and sex, which had precipitated heated discussions at all levels: in the mass media, courts and Parliaments. Despite of the differences in peoples’ reception of representations of violence, religion and sex, and despite, too, the change in the meanings and importance of these concepts, these issues still pose questions for censors.

Over the years, violence in movies meant bloodshed, scattered corpses, illustration of the agonies of death. Whereas sex meant nudity, pornography, obscenity and explicit love scenes. Horror films like *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1931), *Freaks* (1932) and *Island of lost Souls* (1932) were either banned or cut by the censors and were given an ‘H’ certificate, which was replaced by an ‘X’ certificate later on. Some of the horror films remained banned until the late 1950s or the 1960s.¹⁷

The other essential concern of the censors was politics. To maintain the political status quo, “no criticism was permitted of the monarchy, government, church, police judiciary or friendly foreign countries ... and no depiction of current controversial issues (strikes, pacifism, the rise of Fascism, for instance)” (Richards 1997: 168). On these grounds films like *The Mad Dogs of Europe* (1933) and *The Relief of Lucknow* (1938) were censored. The first was banned because it “denounce[d] Nazi persecution of the Jews” (Ibid. 171) and because “the BBFC was not prepared to pass

¹⁷ Robertson 1985.

attacks upon Nazi domestic policies, for in theory Germany remained a friendly nation [with] which Britain enjoyed normal diplomatic relations” (Robertson 1989: 75). The latter was banned because of an Indian Office objection. The Ministry of Information, understandably, restricted the role of the BBFC during the Second World War. But the restrictions on the BBFC were lifted after the War.

The primary job of the censors of the 1930s was to examine and classify films before being exhibited. They then passed the films with a classified certificate, cut some of the scenes or banned them without serious challenge until the late 1950s, when John Trevelyan became Director of the BBFC (his title back then was Secretary to the BBFC). Trevelyan had to keep up with the rapid cultural changes in the 1960s and to balance these changes with his censorial job. The meanings of violence and sex changed through time and thus the censors had to cope with these changes. Audience and critics alike accept what, at one time, is regarded as brutal and sinful and at another time is regarded as innocent and part of the story line of the movie. Consequently, the codes of censorship in the movies had to change.

Another major fact that helped in liberalising the British cinema was the influence of foreign films. By 1964, England became the centre of attraction for film Directors. “England ... was becoming ‘the entertainment capital of the world’, so much of the finance came from America and so many of the striking films were made by foreign-born directors” (Armes 1979: 280). Among the most influential foreign directors were directors such as the Polish Roman Polanski and the Americans Stanley Kubrick and Joseph Losey. Retrospectively, the speedy changes in the censorship

laws seem remarkable. The BBFC passed films like *A Taste of Honey* (1963), *Up the Junction* (1967), the Swedish film *Hugs and Kisses* (1968), *Women in Love* (1969), and *Easy Rider* (1969). Although these films contained, variously, nudity (women and men), homosexuality, abortion and drug-taking, they were permitted during most of the 1960s in Britain. Censorship was relaxed in films with regard to swearing as well. So, in 1963 ‘bloody’ became regularly heard as well as ‘bugger’ in 1967 and ‘fuck’ in 1970.¹⁸

However, when film directors went to the extreme in illustrating sexuality, violence, sexual violence or drugs, their films became subject to banning or heavy cutting. Henceforth, the margins of censorship had been pushed further as a result of the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and it became more relaxed even with regard to what used to be the most sensitive and controversial issues. “Censors were to see their work as limiting excessive displays of sex, violence and anti-social behaviour... [Consequently,] films became more and more explicit in the areas of sex and violence” (Murphy 1997: 1997).

Having said this, there were others, in the 1970s, who blamed the cinema as well as the BBFC for the decline in the morals of society. The outcry of protest against them was very loud when films like *The Devils* (1970), *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *Straw Dogs* (1971) and *Last Tango in Paris* (1973) were passed. All sectors of society – the press, critics and politicians – combined in criticising the passing of such films by the censors. Although *A Clockwork Orange*, for example, was released

¹⁸ Richards 1997, p. 174 – 175.

in Britain, Kubrick, the director, who was under enormous pressure, attracting severe criticism and a hostile reaction from critics, the public and the government alike, had to withdraw his film from the British cinemas. Moudling, the Home Secretary of the day, asked to see the film and then intervened to prohibit it because it contained many violent scenes of sexual violence, i.e. raping, killing and destroying portrayed as fun. The film caused a storm of abuse against Kubrick himself, who received death threats.¹⁹ No video of the film was allowed in Britain either because of the damaging effect it might have on the audience, particularly the children. However, the video was released in Britain after the death of Kubrick.

The work of the BBFC has been influenced by two main factors. The first is the personality of the Director/Secretary of the board and the second is the change in peoples' attitudes over the years. When John Trevelyan became the secretary of the BBFC, he started a process of relaxing censorship. But his policy as a secretary could have faced a dead end under the bitter criticism from many sectors in the society if he had not been aided by the overall air of social and cultural change in society. One of the changes in the practices of the BBFC was evident in its classification system.

2.3.3 The 1980s

As the 1960s were a backlash on the values of the previous decades, so too were the 1980s the backlash on the values of the 1960s. The call for reverting to the old values of society became louder in the 1980s. To condemn the 1960s was a fashion, which

¹⁹ From the British Television, channel 4, a documentary – a film review – on 18 March 2000 about the re-releasing of *A Clockwork Orange* in the new millennium.

was transformed into a phenomenon. Margaret Thatcher, the former British Prime Minister (1979 – 1991), was among those who did not favour the 1960s' legacy, “we are reaping what was sown in the sixties”, she said in 1982. “The fashionable theories and the permissive claptrap set the scene ... for a society in which the old virtues of discipline and restraint were denigrated” (cited in Aldgate 1995: 1). Mrs Thatcher was not alone on her bandwagon, to borrow Aldgate's expression. Many politicians and critics joined her. This not to suggest, however, that there were no challenges to the Thatcherite views. Writers, playwrights, artists and critics saw in her views a call to restore conventional controls and tighten the government's political grip, which had been weakened by the massive changes of the 1960s. These voices, contrary to what Mrs Thatcher called for, emphasised the importance of the great achievement of the decade that was crowned by the abolition of theatrical censorship in 1968, as mentioned earlier.²⁰

In the cinema of the 1980s, the story took another twist. Just as Trevelyan's policy of liberalisation had been aided by changes in society, so too was James Ferman's – the Director of the BBFC (1975 – 1998) – conservative policy aided by the policy of the Labour government in the 1970s and by a Conservative government in the 1980s as well as by the 1980s backlash on the values of the 1960s. However, some of the films of the time like *Monty Python's Life of Brian* (1979) and *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988) caused a stir. But the outcry against these films came not because of

²⁰ Among the other achievements are *The Sexual Offences Act* (1967), *The Abortion Act* (1967), *Divorce Reform Act* (1969). For more details see Marwick 1990.

the sex or violence; instead they were because the “objections hinged on the blasphemy, much less resonant an offence in a country which had become one of the most secularised in the world” (Murphy 1997: 175).

2.3.3.1 The Video

When the home video appeared in the 1980s as a new form of media, and after the flood of films that contained sex, violence and horror, the BBFC had to expand its work to include ratings for the videos. So, the above-mentioned classifications were expanded to include video films as well. The BBFC added a new category, ‘Uc’, which means ‘restricted for Video films only’. This rating means that the video films are universal, particularly for young children, and suitable for pre-school children to watch by themselves, like *Teletubbies* and *Winnie the Pooh*. The *Video Recording Act* was promulgated in 1984 and took effect in 1985. The danger of video films is that the viewer can slow down, repeat, and pause the same scene of sex/horror, or play the film endlessly. This very fact makes the BBFC adopt a stricter policy of censorship. In 1994, the *Act* was amended to protect young children from the anti-social influence of watching adult materials on videos and to reduce the harm of horror, sex, criminal behaviour or illegal drugs in video films.²¹

The development in the mass media in the last decade of the twentieth century had been rapid and enormous, creating considerable new challenges for the movie censors. The censors now work in the promised age of the Internet and thousands of

²¹ It is believed that the BBFC, in 1994, amended the Video Recording Act of 1984 because of the “renewed controversy in 1993, when the murder of baby James Bulger was linked to the video *Child’s Play III*, which was passed by the BBFC” (Murphy 1997: 176).

channels of pay TV, sky channels and it was soon realised that no one would be able to control what people watch except for themselves. The new developments needed a new director. Ferman had to leave after being the man in charge since 1975.

2.3.4 The 1990s

In fact, the debate over the cultural and moral legacy of the 1960s has been gaining ground since the mid-1970s. It became a hot issue in the 1980s and it never seemed to halt even three decades later. People in the 1990s seem to have an overwhelming feeling about the sixties. This is reflected in the revival of sixties fashions, hairstyles, the rising number of sales in the musical hits of the sixties and, most importantly, the revival of the values that were said to be very popular in that decade: love, peace and equality. It has to be said however that there had been a shift of interest, in the nineties, in these values. The dominant value became peace and not love, which dominated the sixties.

Despite all the similarities between the two decades – the sixties and the nineties – one major difference separates the two. This major difference consists in the enormous developments in science and technology that took place in the 1990s. It became very difficult for countries, let alone individuals, to cope with the on-going development, achievements and innovations of the last decade of the twentieth century. The consequences of the new technologies have an immediate impact on all spheres of life. The world was frequently represented as a ‘global village’. With satellites, sky channels and the Internet, the whole world is brought to one’s room, office or laboratory. The iron curtains that used to keep information and different

kinds of knowledge away from people had collapsed. The calls for unrestricted access to knowledge, especially in the second half of the nineties, when the new technologies became widely available, became greater than before.²² As a result, literature and mass media enjoyed more freedom in the 1990s, probably more than ever.

Obscenity, nude performances, strong language, religious criticism, violence, and political criticism became more frequent in the media and literature of the 1990s in the UK as well as in many other countries. Censorship in performances of any kind – whether cinema, television, video or theatre – has been relaxed. Towards the end of the decade, concepts such as homosexuality, divorce and the declining importance of marriage and traditional family life became the content of many dramatic and literary works. Some years ago these concepts were taboo. Any discussion of these themes in literature and the media was subject to the censors' blue pen. Nowadays, the uncensored use of these themes divides society between those in favour of and those against these works and writings.

Does this mean that censorship has diminished in the new age of communication and high technology, and that there is no political patronage of films or any other form of media? The answer is no, but censorship has changed its form yet again in the course of the twentieth century and the presence of censorship is still as powerful as it was before. Since the 1930s, totalitarian governments in Europe claimed the role long

²² The freedom of knowledge, enshrined in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, protected every one's right to freedom of information and expression.

practised by the church. Political censorship dominated in Spain, Germany and Italy between the two World Wars. Gradually after the Second World War, political censorship began to ebb in Western Europe. Yet governments had to come to terms with social and technological progress. They had to change their tactics. Thus, overt censorship became covert censorship. The authorities found different ways of achieving their goals by legislating new rules, modifying old regulations or by imposing pressure on individuals, the media or literature. Moreover, when governments feel the heat of criticism on TV or Satellite channels, on theatres, in the press or in books, they resume the old form of censorship of banning books and newspapers or blocking the transmission of these TV and Satellite channels. If this policy does not work, governments may resort to the last arrow in their quiver: assassination, which is, to borrow George Bernard Shaw's words, "the extreme form of censorship" (cited in O'Higgins 1972: 11).

To sum up, censorship existed from early times; maybe from the moment Man was able to express himself in any sort of performing, speaking or writing. Censorship had two sides, positive and negative. The most dominant side, however, was/is the negative side and its results were/are devastating. Since the Greeks of Athens, intellectuals have been charged with different kinds of accusations such as blasphemy, seditious writings, impiety, corrupting the youth, breaching the laws and legislation of their countries and threatening the security of the state. Books have been burnt, thinkers, philosophers, and writers banished, tortured, imprisoned or burnt alive. Censorship has had to change its forms from time to time in line with social, cultural and technological changes. When printing was invented, for example,

new kinds of censorship were introduced, such as pre-publication censorship; the *Index* and the *Inquisition* were institutionalised, church censorship and government censorship were developed as systems.

In recent times, the field of censorship was expanded from books to newspapers, illustrated magazines, films, plays, radio, television, and videos. Nowadays, it involves the discussion of other topics like freedom of speech and democracy. “Writers and broadcasters can now freely discuss and illustrate areas of life that used to be taboo subjects and there is much freedom for them in their choice of language and mode of presentation. Scenes in books, plays, films or broadcasts that would in the past have been censored are now freely shown” (Daves 1978: 9).

Censorship, recently, took new forms. Mostly, it is applied in disguise. However, the positive side of censorship, although overshadowed by the devastating effects of the negative side, was always the rationale for applying censorship in any society. In other words, the laws of censorship were set to protect members of societies from being corrupted by ideas, performances or teachings that complainants disagree with.

In this sense, Plato banned Homer’s *Odyssey* because, he thought, it was not suitable for younger readers, and so did Emperor Caligula of Rome centuries later. In recent times, some States in America, for example, have banned *Hamlet* and *The Wizard of Oz* from school libraries. Strindberg’s *A Doll’s House* was banned in America as well because it contained too much feminist language. *Huckleberry Finn* was banned for its racist language – though some praised the work for being anti-racist.

3. The Definition of Censorship

The question of definition is the knot that will connect the issues raised in the earlier part of the chapter. The purpose of the survey of the history of censorship was to try to outline its existence in early periods and then to look for its changing forms. The following discussion is meant to tie up this chapter by trying to answer the question: what does censorship mean?

The definition of censorship has always been a controversial issue, as is the topic of censorship itself. Attempts at defining censorship have been made by writers, critics, playwrights, authorities, philosophers, and lawyers among others. All of them come up with different versions of the meaning of censorship, depending on their own understanding or experience of it, which, yet again, emphasises the subjective nature of censorship.

Censorship may be defined by working out what those who are entrusted with censorship, the censors, do. If we start with dictionaries, we will find many different meanings of censorship. *The Oxford English Dictionary*, for example, defines censorship in two ways. The first is “the office of a Roman censor whose responsibility was to supervise over morals”. The second is “the office or function of an official, a censor, in some countries, whose duty it is to inspect all books, journals, dramatic pieces, etc., before publication, to secure that they shall contain nothing immoral, heretical or offensive to the government”. In *Webster’s Dictionary*, a censor is either: “an official empowered to examine written or printed matter (as manuscript of books or plays) in order to forbid publication, circulation, or

representation if it contains any thing objectionable”; or censors are officers or officials “charged with scrutinising communication to intercept, suppress or delete material harmful to their countries’ or organisations’ interests”.²³

In literature, censorship is defined by O’Higgins (1972: 11) as, “a process whereby restrictions are imposed upon the collection, dissemination and exchange of information, opinions and ideas”. Others, such as Balmuth (1979: 141), emphasise the role of culture in their definition:

“Censorship gave much attention to the ‘direction’ or tendency of a printed work ... originally ... used to refer to the point of view of the work ... The word came to refer also to the unintentional position of a work, the intended or unintended attitude of the author, and the impression produced by the work on the reader.”

As far as drama is concerned, Robertson (1979: 246) states that “theatre censorship was originally imposed to curb opposition to the Reformation. In 1543, [after ... the closure of] the monasteries an ‘Act for the advancement of true religion’ directed that ‘plays...and other fantasies’ which ‘meddle with interpretations of scripture’ should be ‘abolished, extinguished and forbidden’”. Whereas Stephens (1980: 17) defines censorship “... in a quite fundamental sense [as], a personal act influenced, consciously or not, by individual prejudices and predilection... In other words, the personalities involved matter a great deal, whether the censor happened as unassuming ... or as forthright and colourful ... ”.

In the film industry, censorship is described by Robertson (1989: 150) as:

“A device to perpetuate the political and social status quo [...] when a communication medium has threatened to extend ideas and awareness to the lower

²³ Ironically, Webster’s Dictionary itself is banned in some schools in New Jersey in America because it defines sexual intercourse as “the sexual joining of two individuals” (Boulé 1999: 1).

strata of British society, governments and parliament have taken measures to safeguard their decision-making hegemony between great elections”

Hunnings (1967: 14) argued along similar lines in his definition of film censorship.

To him, “censorship is restricted to preventing the kinds of harm[,] which the law seeks to prevent in its provisions relating to the printed and spoken word ... ‘no film shall be exhibited at the premises:

(i) Which is likely (a) To encourage or incite to crime; or

(b) To stir up hatred against any section of the public in

Great Britain on grounds of colour race or ethnic or

natural origins; or

(ii) The effect of which is, if taken as a whole, such as to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely to see it’.

De Grazia and Newman (1982: xvii- xviii) define censorship of films as

“Any government or industry practice that has interfered with or changed the content of the movies as determined by its creators – from criminal prosecutions and governmental censor boards to private industry self-regulation including war-time “voluntary co-operation” with the military”.

Some other writers and critics have taken the definition of censorship even further.

To Foucault (1980: 194), censorship is “a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, law, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions”. Kuhn (1988: 6–7) emphasises the importance of Foucault’s definition and relates censorship to power. She defines censorship, “as an activity which participates in an apparatus, in a set of practices whose interrelations are imbued not so much with power *tout court* as with the ‘play’ of power. Power, in

this model, is a process, precisely a holding-in-play”. Moreover, Kuhn sheds light on other sides of film censorship: the positive side of it. She highlights the fact that film censorship, as most of historical and sociological studies emphasise, is not only about the prohibitive aspects, i.e. cuts, bans or boards and organisations of censors, who exclude themes, topics and images from films. Although she agrees that censorship does operate as described above – as a prohibitive model – Kuhn considers as equally important the fact that “film censorship is not reducible to a circumscribed and predefined set of institution and institutional activities, but it is produced in array of constantly shifting discourses, practices and apparatuses. It cannot therefore be regarded as either fixed or monolithic ... [it is] an ongoing process embodying complex and often contradictory relations of power” (Kuhn (1988: 127).

Davies (1978: 1) gives censorship another dimension by defining censorship of obscenity as “a social fact, a reflection of a social order in which some groups impose or seek to impose a set of moral rules on others”.

Clearly, definitions of censorship vary from one field to another. One main characteristic, however, connects all the definitions: the prohibitive, preventive control of censorship over all walks of life. Though all the definitions are valuable, each in its field, and give a different view of censorship, for the purposes of this study, the term censorship will be used as follows:²⁴

²⁴ From an online article by Versaware Inc, 1999: www.funkandwagnalls.com.

Supervision and control of the information and ideas that are circulated among the people within a society. In modern times, censorship refers to the examination of books, periodicals, plays, films, television and radio program[me]s, news, reports, and other communication media for the purpose of altering or suppressing parts thought to be objectionable or offensive. The objectionable material may be considered immoral or obscene, heretical or blasphemous, seditious or treasonable or injurious to the national security.

4. Forms of Censorship

Censorship can take many forms because of its fickle nature. Censorship can be divided into two main forms: covert censorship and overt censorship. These two forms can be subdivided into other forms as well and these will be discussed below.

4.1 Covert Censorship

Covert censorship can be divided into four forms. First, self-censorship, or autonomous censorship.²⁵ It is a process that takes place inside the individual's mind, stemming from ambition, self-interest, envy, fear, family or religious values, moral and social concepts. The result of these motivations is that the individual refrains, or is distracted, consciously or unconsciously, from expressing his ideas, beliefs or teachings. Self-censorship is referred to, sometimes, by different expressions such as 'the policeman inside one's brain' or as 'the censor over one's shoulder'. Tolstoy once said:

You would not believe how, from the very commencement of my activity, that horrible Censor question has tormented me! I wanted to write what I felt; but all the time it occurred to me that what I wrote would not be permitted, and involuntarily I

²⁵ There is no agreement on the terminology in the field of censorship, so some terms are to be invented. For more details see O'Higgins 1972.

had to abandon the work, I abandoned and went on abandoning, and meanwhile the years passed away.²⁶

The second form of covert censorship is paternalistic censorship. This form of censorship can be applied at the micro and macro levels. On the micro levels parents apply it while bringing up their children in what they see as the best way. So they do not expose their children to what might be considered harmful or offensive influences. Regardless of their children's opinions or wishes, parents, in most cases, set the model of behaviour for children to follow. Paternalistic censorship at this level includes the dos, don'ts and, in some societies, the shame culture. At the macro level, tribes – where they exist – bodies, councils, governments or regimes play the parental role. They give themselves the right to treat their members, societies or citizens as parents treat their children i.e. the protection model.

The third form of covert censorship is social (moral) censorship (social values). This is the process of prohibition or discouraging opinions, ideas and teachings by some organisations or groups in society, or by society itself. This form of censorship depends on the nature and the norms of the society in question. It goes without saying that every society has its own laws, traditions, habits, behaviour and educational culture/system, which differ in certain aspects from those of other societies. In this regard we need to understand two factors. First, some groups in a

²⁶ Cited in the opening pages (no page number) of Murray Schumach's book: *The Face on the Cutting Room Floor*, 1964.

society, religious or political groups, or other majority groups are in a position to influence the decision making to meet their own interests. The second factor is that the network of laws, traditions and education in any society depends on a long history of moral, religious and cultural practices that are engraved in the minds and hearts of individuals. So, what might be considered obscene or democratic practice, for example, in Britain is not necessarily the same in other countries. Consequently, the adoption of other countries' values or the imposition of values from a certain culture is not always the right or the wise procedure to follow because, as Ronald Dworkin (1994: 211) argues,

We cannot reasonably ask people whose entire social structure and sense of national identity are based on supreme authority of a particular religion to permit what they believe to be ridicule of that religion within their own borders. How can we expect people who are committed to a particular faith, as a value transcending all others, to tolerate its open desecration?

The fourth form of covert censorship is voluntary censorship. This is the process applied by a group of individuals who form a body of any sort, or by one individual who heads that particular body. This body sets regulations for the dissemination of knowledge and information. These regulations, in themselves, depend on agreed beliefs or opinions and, most importantly, do not oppose the overall policy and regulations of the State. Legal authorisation is not always important in the application of this form of censorship. Examples of voluntary censorship could be the by-laws of certain organisations, companies or industries such as TV, radio, video, satellite and the Internet. Alternatively, these might be the regulations and codes of educational bodies – universities and schools – or the by-laws of certain departments of that university or school.

4.2 Overt Censorship

The first form of overt censorship is legal censorship. This might be considered as part of social censorship. It is meant to protect the morals of society by forming laws through the courts or any other legal institution. Legal censorship can take two other forms: pre-censorship (sometimes called prior censorship) and penal censorship. The first is concerned with examining the material before it is published, broadcast or performed by an individual censor, a group of people or an organisation of censorship. Any publication or distribution of the material or part of it before being approved by the pre-examiner(s) is considered illegal. The second form of legal censorship is penal censorship. It is the application of all kinds of penalties and punishments. These could be fines, imprisonment, confiscation, deportation or the ultimate penalty: execution or assassination.

It is worth mentioning here that wording, in penal censorship, plays an essential role. It is often designed to be ambiguous and vague to give the authorities room to manoeuvre, i.e., to justify, explain, and impose their policies. Penal censorship, whenever applied, is the focus of concern for many anti-censorship groups, who believe that the deliberate ambiguity of its wording leads not only to the torture and suffering of many innocent people, but also to the loss of many important facts, as well as to the violation of Human Rights.

The second form of overt censorship is extra-legal censorship. It could be considered to support the process of the legal censorship. When the law does not authorise certain actions, extra-legal censorship succeeds where other forms had failed. Its

versatility gives the authorities a golden chance to apply enormous pressure without being accused of censorship. It can take the form of pressure or the threat of further action if the particular interests of that authority are not met. One of the examples in this regard could be Munir Shamma, the Arabic translator at the BBC in 1947. Shamma was sacked following enormous pressure from Jewish listeners, who felt insulted by his Arabic translation, *irhabi*, of the word terrorist, when he was describing the Jewish actions against the Palestinians.²⁷ They bombarded the BBC with letters of protest and threats to kill Shamma. Others called him the BBC's Hitler. Shamma also received death threats by phone from the same people. The pressure started to ease slightly after Shamma's boss was convinced – by Shamma himself and after consulting other Arabic language specialist working in the BBC – that the translation of the word terrorist, *irhabi*, is the best found in the Arabic dictionaries and its connotation was much better than the Arabic word, *mujrim*, which was suggested as an alternative. Shamma added that the Arabic translation he used does not describe enough the evil and brutality of the Jews in pre 1948-Palestine and that he should have chosen another word.

The third form of overt censorship is common-law censorship. It is the process of applying one's common laws to prevent or to discourage knowledge, information or publications. Although the authorities do not intervene in this particular form of censorship, the individual(s), who apply(s) censorship use(s) the authorities' power. One example of this could be “the refusal of a bookseller to stock certain books

²⁷ My own translation of some of Shamma's words in *al-Quds al-Arabi* newspaper, 22 February 2000.

because he disapproves of their content [, or is afraid to stock them, as in the case of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*]” (O’Higgins 1972: 13).

To sum up, whether it is covert or overt, the forms of censorship are determined by the interplay of a network of forces: social, religious, paternal and moral, which seem to have a varied and a shifting effect in a society at any given time.

5. The Censors

Coming all the way from the times of the Athenians to more recent times, we come to the conclusion that the changes in the domain of censorship do not only affect its definition, forms, methods of application and forms of punishment but they also affect its field. The field of censorship is either expanded or reduced depending on the given circumstances in a particular era. The only element, which seems to remain constant, however, is the rationale behind applying censorship, the results or impact of censorship on individuals, societies or cultures and the presence of censors.

Censors, no matter what guise, name or title they may adopt are of four kinds and they seem to carry out the same tasks throughout history. The first group of censors are parents. It goes without saying that the ultimate aim of most parents is to make sure that their children develop behaviourally in the most suitable way which is defined according to the parents’ standards or norms of behaviour. Parents are the first censors whose effect may be engraved in their children’s minds forever. They are the real censors, who draw the moral, religious and cultural line that establishes awareness in the child and creates his conscience. In their effort to protect their

children, parents may sometimes take their actions further, from the home to the outside world. By way of suggestion or recommendation, they carry their protective methods to their children's schools. There are hundreds of examples where parents recommend or protest against certain methods of teaching applied in their children's schools or against certain books that are taught or found in these schools' libraries. Parents succeed, in most cases, in pressurising these libraries to ban the books if they fear that the literature contains ideas or vocabulary they do not embrace.

The second kind of censor is the conscience. This originates from within the individual and motivates him to do or not to do certain actions and tells him 'where to draw the line'. It has, in most cases, a preventive nature. It prevents the individual from expressing thoughts, images and feelings. Or it may change into a comprehensive desire to prevent others from expressing themselves the way they wish to. The conscience, as a censor, is part of the individual's psychology. It operates according to his cultural, religious, moral and educational background, which varies from one individual to another and from one society to another. Each of these cultural, religious and moral beliefs and systems of thought can work as internal censors as well. They can encourage the individual to act positively or negatively according to what is known to him or agreed upon in his society as being positive or negative.

The third kind of censor is the citizen, the officer and the administrator. These censors work within political and religious systems. They are appointed, in most

cases, by the authorities to fulfil their policies and to prevent crimes or riots in advance.

The fourth group of censors covers those bodies and institutions that represent governments. One of the most important tasks they carry out is to keep their societies *safe* and *secure*, and to *protect* the existing political structure. Accordingly, they move quickly to prevent or prohibit any publications, performances, writings or even utterances that threaten or move the people's feelings against the policies of the government that they represent. In other cases, they, with the help of their governments, may intervene to prevent communication between people or intimidate others when any kind of criticism is directed to the head of that government, regime, religious or political representatives. They could apply the old means of censorship: burning books, banishment, imprisonment, execution, when needed, or they could opt for any other means that complies with their policies or secures their position. Similar procedures are applied in democratic and non-democratic countries to control the people and enable the existing regime to continue as a political system in power. One example of government intervention to shield religion very carefully and to defend it very strongly is the case of the British author Salman Rushdie.

The late Ayatollah Khomeini, spiritual leader and leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution passed the death sentence on Rushdie for his book *The Satanic Verses*. He also offered a reward to anyone who killed Rushdie. Needless to say, the book *The Satanic Verses* was formally and strictly banned in Iran and in all Muslim countries. Although the Iran of today is taking a different route in its politics and in dealing

with the Rushdie case, the new regime in Iran has not repealed Khomeini's death sentence on Rushdie – perhaps because the new reforming tendency in Iran is watched very closely by the religious conservatives. Instead, the regime in Iran nowadays is ignoring the whole subject in the hope that it will die by itself, the policy which some intellectuals in the Arab and Muslim world have argued for right from the beginning of the whole issue.

To conclude, censors' efforts, no matter how different they are or which society they work in are meant to serve three things: social systems, political structures and religious beliefs.

6. The Rationale Behind Censorship

In the course of time, many changes have taken place in the field of censorship but the rationale behind it has remained, more or less, the same. The same arguments for applying censorship have been in evidence since the days of the Greeks and the Romans. The main aims of censorship that they put forward were to protect individuals and societies from evil deeds and to discourage the dissemination of corrupt thoughts, ideas, images or publications and to draw guidelines that shape the public's behaviour. The aims in themselves are idealistic but problems arise from the twists and turns in their application. As O'Higgins (1972: 7) puts it,

“No form of censorship is acceptable unless it can be rationally demonstrated that some social or individual good deserving protection can be safeguarded only by its imposition and that the social or individual good being protected in this way outweighs any restrictions, detriment loss or inconvenience caused thereby to individuals or groups”.

But can this opinion ever be fulfilled? Unfortunately, in most cases it cannot. The fear of falsifying the facts and twisting the laws will always haunt the public under dictatorial regimes because they have lost faith in the authorities and lost interest in the authorities' promises as well. Vaclav Havel, the first president of post-communist Czechoslovakia, has summed up beautifully this situation:

The post totalitarian system touches people at every step, but it does so with its ideological gloves on. This is why life in the system is so thoroughly permeated with hypocrisy and lies: government by bureaucracy is called popular government; the working class is enslaved in the name of the working class; the complete degradation of the individual is presented as his or her ultimate liberation; depriving people of information is making it available; the use of power to manipulate is called the public control of power, and the arbitrary abuse of power is called observing the legal code; the repression of culture is called its development; the expansion of imperial influence is presented as support for the oppressed; the lack of free expression becomes the highest form of freedom; farcical elections become the highest form of democracy; banning independent thought becomes the most scientific of world views; military occupation becomes fraternal assistance. Because the regime is captive to its own lies, it must falsify everything. It falsifies the past. It falsifies the present, and it falsifies the future. It falsifies statistics. It pretends not to possess an omnipotent and unprincipled police apparatus. It pretends to protect human rights. It pretends to persecute no one. It pretends to fear nothing. It pretends to pretend nothing. Individuals need not to believe all these mystifications, but they must behave as though they did, or they must at least tolerate them in silence, or get along well with those who work with them. For this reason, however, they must live within a lie. They need not accept the lie. It is enough for them to have accepted their life with it and in it. For by this very fact, individuals confirm the system, fulfil the system, make the system, are the system.

(Vaclav Havel et al 1985: 30-31).

7. Censorship of the Theatre:

7.1 In Athens and Rome

The Athenians and the Romans developed drama to the highest order of art. After thousands of years, the dramatic works of the great Greek playwrights, such as Sophocles and Aeschylus, and the great Roman playwrights, such as Terence, Plautus and Seneca, are still appreciated and enjoyed by audiences today.

The Greek plays were written to be performed in competitive festivals – political and religious festivals – to celebrate a god. The themes in the plays were: revenge, power, love, and judgement day. As part of Greek life, theatres were also subject to the censorship applied in the other fields of the Athenians' life. Any dramatic performance had to meet the common laws set in the other fields of art and had not to contradict it. Not complying with these rules would lead to banning the dramatic work from being performed, and to the punishment of the playwright.

The Roman playwrights adopted and adapted the same themes. Although the Greek theatrical tradition inspired the Roman theatre, there were some differences. One major difference is that the Roman plays, particularly the tragedies, were by and large written by poets. These plays were written “not as production for the stage but as literary exercises – works that might be read to a select group ... one example would be Seneca's plays that are] generally believed [to be] intended for recitation to small private audience rather than for stage production” (Barnet et al 1997: 148). Another difference is that the Romans used to open their plays by slaughtering “exotic animals...and throwing Christian[s] ... to the wild beasts” (Ibid. 149). The

result of these actions was to paint drama as an enemy to Christianity and as an immoral art. When Rome adopted Christianity as its official religion, in the fifth century, the closure of theatres was not a great surprise. The Christians had opposed theatre, however, long before the fifth century for many reasons,²⁸ one of which is that Christians had been fed to the lions as part of theatrical events. Another reason is that ‘pagan-Romans’ entertained themselves by setting Christians on fire. A third reason stems from church’s hatred of falsehood and the untruths of fiction, literature and the art of acting, which involves the impersonation of one man by another or the impersonation of a man by a woman or vice-versa.

Interestingly enough, Muslims shared the same view of drama, acting and the impersonation of men or women by one another, as will be discussed in the next chapter. As Ibn ‘Abbas narrates, as mentioned in the *Summarised Sahih Al-Bukhari* (1998: 949), “the Prophet, peace be upon him, cursed effeminate men [those men who are in the similitude (assume the manners) of women and those women who assume the manners of men] and said ‘turn them out of your houses ...’”.

The prohibition of theatre in Christian Rome constituted the commencement of religious censorship, which paved the way for the church to claim a bigger role in European society.

²⁸ For more details see Bernet et al 1997.

7.2 The Medieval Period (1100-1500)

In spite of all the strict rules of the Church, the public in Europe enjoyed some forms of drama, sometimes referred to as quasi-dramas, such as the Puppeteers, Jugglers and Mimes.

These quasi-dramas were the people's only chance of entertainment, and the only way of avoiding the censorship of the Church. Ironically, it was the Church that prohibited drama and it was in the Church that drama was reborn. The public had the chance to enjoy liturgical performances in churches. "Liturgy is a prescribed form of worship, including the singing of the Mass, in which bread and wine are consecrated as the body and the blood of Christ" (Barnet et al 1997: 149). The influence of the church – censorship – was evident in the language, content and the themes of liturgical drama. The language was Latin and then was replaced by the vernacular.

Liturgical drama was developed later into *Miracle* and *Mystery* dramas. Yet these forms of drama were all about religion and religious themes. The church heavily influenced the performances because "the main function of drama ... was to show how teachings and morality work in society" (Fredman and Reade 1996: 208). So the church was very much involved in deciding the kind of entertainment the public had to enjoy. In other words, the effect of the church's censorship was hugely felt in every aspect of life. However, the importance of these forms of drama was that they kept the art of performance alive.

The establishment of the Anglican Church in 1533 by King Henry VIII did not affect, contrary to one's imagination and expectations, religious dramas. They survived for many years after the King's split with the Church of Rome and they survived the rigorous of time as well. Mystery and Miracle plays remained popular until the Renaissance era. However, the impact of religious drama faded, not because people did not enjoy them any more or because people were bored with religious drama, but for two other reasons. The first is "Protestantism was hostile to a drama that had developed under Roman Catholic auspices and [secondly because] better dramatic entertainment became available." (Barnet et al 1997: 150).

7.3 The Renaissance Period (1350–1650)

Geographical discoveries as well as scientific inventions marked the Renaissance period.²⁹ To list but few: the discovery of the 'New World' – America – the discovery of ancient Greek and Roman texts, the drawing of what looked to be the first flying machines by Leonardo da Vinci. In addition, many changes occurred in the British society in particular such as the replacement of the feudal system by Capitalism, the emergence of the merchant class and the change in education policy. Education had been the privilege of the nobles, but during the renaissance period sons of merchants were also educated, among them was Shakespeare. More importantly, the printing press was invented and printed matter became gradually more widespread.

²⁹ For more details see Fredman and Reade (1996).

These developments of Renaissance era had their impact on drama. It led to the birth of a new generation of playwrights, such as Marlowe, Kyd, Shakespeare and Jonson. These playwrights, supported by the education of the ancient writings of philosophy and the works of the ancient playwrights, cast aside religious and secular drama. Although they used the same themes of love, revenge and power that were very popular in the previous forms of drama, the new playwrights' drama was different. Their drama was not about the "nativity and judgement day [or any other Biblical stories], but instead [they were] dramas concerning financial and sexual corruption in Italian courts, epics on the many international and civil wars and plays set in fantastic spirit worlds" (Fredman and Reade 1996: 217). In addition to *Comedy* and *Tragedy*, the two popular forms of drama that had survived, the new generation of playwrights added new forms of drama, such as: *romantic comedy*, *city comedy*, *revenge tragedy* and *satires*.

During this period, censorship by the church of dramatic performances faded and drama enjoyed more freedom. However, the dramatist had to face new forms of censorship: State censorship or censorship by men in power. Elizabeth I ordered dramatist, in her first years in power, not to intervene with the politics. "[T]he monarchs exercised undefined powers by the Royal Prerogative ... In the reign of Charles I the word the term Crop-ears was used for opponents of the King who lost their ears as a penalty for criticising the political or religious authorities" (Williams 1994: 125).

The officials of the Elizabethan era were not in favour of theatres for moral and religious reasons and refused to give permission to build permanent playhouses. Thus, plays were staged on wagons. The troupes continued to perform their plays on wagons until 1576, the year in which James Burbage established the first permanent playhouse. He survived the officials' abuse and censorship because "he was a member of a company called the Early of Leicester Men [, who] were protected by various members of the nobility" (Fredman and Reade 1996: 217).

Censorship, in this era, was evident mostly in *satires*. Ben Jonson and Marston, who were the renowned playwrights in this field, wrote about topical matters in their plays using irony to pinpoint weaknesses in society and to ridicule city corporations. Their works were heavily censored and as a result of writing *satires*, they were both imprisoned.

7.4 The Restoration Period (1660–1700)

Drama was not popular at the beginning of this period. Firstly, because of the English Civil War, in the reign of King Charles I and secondly because of the Puritans. The latter did more harm to drama than any other factor. The Puritans prohibited drama on religious grounds, as their main interest was to worship God and to reject the pleasures of life. The Puritans did not only close theatres because they were places of pleasure but they prohibited Christian celebrations as well.

But when things changed politically, i.e., when King Charles II reclaimed his throne in 1660, the Puritans' censorship disappeared suddenly. In fact, the entire Puritans

tradition was thrown out and the public began to enjoy drama once more encouraged by their King. King Charles II was accustomed to drama on the European continent while he was in exile and brought with him the innovations of that drama. Under his rule, drama prospered. One of the consequences of the prosperity of drama in the Restoration period was allowing women to perform on stage. Early drama did not benefit from this; boys played women's roles. As far as censorship is concerned, allowing women to be actresses was a great unprecedented achievement because it destroyed one of the traditions of censorship.³⁰

7.5 The Victorians (1837–1903)

Censorship of drama in the Victorian period had its effect on the subject matter or the way the playwrights treated the subject matter. Plays were censored for religious and moral reasons. Other forms of art such as the opera, the novel and Pantomime, though more lucrative, did not suffer the severe consequences of censorship. Thus, many plays were transformed into operas to avoid censorship. Evidently, “the addition of music to a morally questionable plot [of a play] was sufficient to turn the balance in its favour [and the justification for that was] it makes a difference, for the words are then subsidiary to the music” (Stephens 1980: 83). One example could be the French playwright Alexander Dumas' play *La Dame aux Camelias* (published as a novel in 1848 and then as a play in 1852), which was banned in England for moral

³⁰ It is noteworthy that until recently, women were not allowed to be actresses. Men, in some parts of the Arab world such as Saudi Arabia, played women's roles in drama. Christian Arabs, in some other countries such as Jordan, had more appreciation for arts and allowed women to be actresses, which paved the way for Muslim women to join them as years progressed. Women were prohibited from being actresses on religious and cultural grounds.

reasons. But when the play was transformed into an opera entitled *La Traviata*, with a score by Verdi's music, it was allowed in Britain.³¹

The public, in the Victorian period, had more influence in censoring dramatic works. They determined religious censorship by expressing their view and attitudes in newspapers. The Puritan ethos was still strong in the Victorian mind and it seemed that "English [people] did not cease to be Puritans when they stopped believing in Puritanism" (Quinlan 1941: 207). References to heaven, God, angels or other expressions such as 'damn it' were prohibited in arts and drama. Despite the modification of its laws, religious censorship actually became more inflexible in the course of time.

Morality, like religion, in Victorian society, was not the job of the official censors alone; but it was also a public responsibility, or was perceived as such. The general norm of the times was decency and decorousness. Accordingly, words such as 'thigh' or 'affairs' were not allowed in any dramatic text because they were thought to be offensive and indelicate words for the sensibility of the audience.

The greatest fear for the Victorian censors, however, was French drama. In their view, French drama was insidious and allowing its performance in England would corrupt the morality of society. Consequently, most drama from France was banned. The only way of allowing any French drama performance was by transforming it, as mentioned above, into opera. The censors used to apply their own common sense to

³¹ For more details see Stephens 1980.

ban plays on moral grounds. Their guide was, as was the case with the religious censorship, the view of the general public.

The British resistance to French morals as depicted in drama gradually became weaker. The censors' job, as a result, became more demanding and more complicated because it was very difficult to decide what was moral and what was immoral. The nature of Victorian society did not help the censors in their task. The ironic fact, though, about Victorian society was that, while on one hand it encouraged prostitution and entertainment, on the other hand, it looked very religious and strictly censored drama. Maybe theatre in general "was ... moral in the sense that it was expected to adhere to the standards of behaviour and conduct which had become identified with social respectability" (Stephens 1980: 78).

In addition to moral censorship, the Victorians were subject to powerful political censorship. Both the upper class and the middle class shared the view that it was not appropriate to discuss politics on stage. From the authorities' point of view peace and order should be maintained in society, and one way of maintaining it was by exercising control over drama. The authorities were very sensitive to dramatic works and examined them carefully because they believed that drama could arouse the public's political awareness. Thus, words such as 'rebellion', 'resistance', 'reform' or any reference to the Royal Family, the Irish problem and the Reform Bill Law were deleted from texts.³²

³² For more details see Stephens 1980.

Surprisingly, most dramatists did not protest against the authorities' strict policy of censorship and accepted whatever text was allowed by the censors. The only exceptions were Shaw, Mathew Arnold and Henry Arthur Jones. The absence of the dramatists' freedom, in the Victorian period, left severe marks on their drama. In general, "censorship succeeded in promoting only a safe, but spineless and intellectually barren drama" (Stephens 1980: 156).

"In 1843 the Theatres Act removed the restriction on the theatres and defined the Lord Chamberlain's powers to the restraints of decency. The Lord Chamberlain's censorship came to an end in 1968" (Williams 1994: 125).

8. Censorship of Television

The invention of television made the work of censors and governments, who were already under fire on several fronts, even more complicated. They had to change, modulate or legislate new regulations to control television broadcasting, which reaches a large audience of all ages, especially children. To do just that was not easy in a society which was revolting against old values.

At its inception in 1954, television censorship stemmed from the general laws in censoring theatre and cinema. Television posed more serious problems to the censors and the public, more than the other forms of entertainment, cinema and theatre in particular, simply because it reached nearly everybody. The main concern in any TV film was to preserve the good taste or decency of the public and not to encourage crime or disorder. The popularity and accessibility of television increased over the

years. Accordingly, the concern for the morals in society increased as well. The content of what was to be shown on TV had to be examined and controlled. Strict censorship was applied on the content of TV films, and programmes “especially in relation to sex, violence [,] drugs ... avoiding extreme political views and ensuring that controversial opinions are balanced by dispensation of conventional wisdom” (Robertson 1979: 273).

Out of their concern for their children, parents cried out for more control on the contents of films especially as TV began to establish itself as a new form of culture. Their fear was that children might imitate the exploits of TV films and programmes. As was the case in cinema and theatre in the 1950s and the 1960s, the topics of the sixties – sex, violence, drugs and Rock and Roll music – swept all kinds of TV commercial advertisements, films and programmes. Parents called for positive censorship on the content of TV broadcasting, some governments appointed a board of directors (censors) as members of the TV stations, who were to decide the overall policy of the TV stations. In Britain, for example, there is the BBC’s board that decides what policy the BBC should follow in everything shown on screen. In addition to the station’s own board there are independent companies that do censorial jobs for TV stations, such as the Independent Television Authority (ITA), the Independent Television Commission (ITC) and the Broadcasting Standards Commission, which are responsible for the legal obligation and the contents of films, commercial advertisements and programmes. The ITA, for example, “draw up codes on violence and on advertising, while setting limits to what may be included in programmes and giving the government extensive legal authority to control what is

broadcast” (O’Higgins 1972: 123). In addition to all these boards and commissions, there is BBFC, which extended its work to include everything shown on cinema screens, television screens, and on paid TV channels, Cable TV and Sky Channels.

One of the major problems that censors have had to face is broadcasting films licensed for cinemas on TV. Their task becomes even bigger if the original censors of cinema had classified these films for adults only – an ‘X’ certificate, (or 18 certificate when the classifying categories changed). To overcome this dilemma, TV censors re-schedule these particular films at a later time in the evening and often cut the contents of the films. They do this for two reasons. The first reason is to make the films suitable for TV broadcasting. Second, they do so to make the films “fit neatly into the ordinary television programme schedule ... [and] into particular periods” (Ibid. 135). However, this policy of re-scheduling and cutting of films that TV censors do has not been received with much applause particularly from the filmmakers, mainly because their films are often distorted. Neither has it been applauded by most viewers, who insist that not all cinema movies are suitable for TV. One example of these films could be Quentin Tarantino’s film *Pulp Fiction* which struggled to get a certificate in cinema let alone as a TV feature film. *Pulp Fiction* is considered a ‘dangerous film’ because of the large amount of violence, sex contained in it, and it is believed that it encourages drug taking because of the glamorous ways of illustrating drugs in the film. The hero, played by John Travolta, after taking drugs, becomes livelier, goes to the bar, meets a girl and wins a dancing

competition.³³ In spite of all the criticism, the film was given an 18 certificate in cinemas and then shown in the UK on Channel 4 at the beginning of the year 2000.

Although the story of censorship in television is not different from that of the cinema, the pressure on the television censors is more intense. The crucial impact of the Cultural Revolution in the sixties, the change in people's attitudes over time, the influence of the censor, (director), of a certain board, such as the BBFC, and the massive developments in communication, affected censorship in television as well. It led to a more relaxed censorship in its programmes and films, which forced changes in the work of censors and the laws of censorship.

Television, in recent times has surpassed all other entertainment in the life of modern man. Television occupies a central place in the modern house; a luxury that has changed into a necessity. Nearly every house nowadays is equipped with TV equipment. The place of books in people's lives is changing, to say the least. Its place in the lives of the young, in particular, has been taken by television and, more recently, by the Internet. Most people turn to their televisions instead of books to enjoy themselves. In general, books are viewed as "boring, old fashioned, frustrating[,] requiring too much efforts and are not trendy" (Livingstone and Bovill 1999: 2).

This very fact emphasises, yet again, the dominant role of television over all other entertainment – even over music – on young people and children's lists nowadays. "Its dominance rests heavily on the breadth of gratification it offers: for excitement,

³³ Channel 4's documentary: *Censored*, 1999.

to overcome boredom, for relaxation and to overcome the threat of feeling left out ... [It is] the medium which young people 'would miss most', by three times as many as its nearest rival, music centres" (Livingstone and Bovill 1999: 1).

Despite the demand from most parents, the portrayal of violence, bad language and explicit sex on TV screens has increased and sexual activity, in particular, has become more acceptable amongst the public and is no longer a taboo. People have become more tolerant of sex and violence in television films, something that was not acceptable 30 years ago. Consequently, TV censors have had to come to terms with the change in people's attitude towards sex, which pervades every aspect of life. Its portrayal has become central to cinema and TV films, magazines, newspapers, the Internet, commercial advertisements, talk shows and video films. Censorship has become more relaxed in a world of high technology. In addition to re-scheduling and cutting processes, the main act that censors practise on TV screens nowadays is announcing suitable warnings – sign posting – before feature films and programmes. 'C', 'A' or 'B' warnings are given for feature films and programmes by the TV station. So, viewers of the five channels of the British television would hear the warning:

'Channel (4)/(5) has given this film/programme a 'C' for caution because it contains sex scenes or/and bad language or/and violent scenes'. Or

'The BBC has given this film/programme an 'A' because it contains adult material'.

Or 'ITV (Scottish Television) has given this film/programme a 'G' for Parent guidance because some parents would consider some of the content of the film/programme unsuitable for children.

Despite of all the procedures taken by the authorities and the censors, the dangerous role of television is highlighted by the unexpected and uncontrolled events that may take place during a live coverage of any programme, even in sport programmes. One example could be Eric Cantona, the Manchester United Football player and captain, kicking one of the spectators in a live coverage match, an act which was deplored and condemned by all the spectators. Another example could be the modern phenomenon of streaking and mooning, especially in live games of Cricket or live interviews.³⁴ These examples could have a devastating effect on all viewers, and despite the fact that they breach the television law of ‘good taste and decency’, they remain uncontrollable.

Commercial advertisements are another area of concern in which viewers cannot predict the content. Those who make the adverts seem to be haunted by sex all the time. Nearly every advert contains an explicit or implicit hint of sexual connotation. One example could be alcoholic adverts – the Baccardi Breezers and Baileys adverts, for example. In the latter, a beautiful young woman kisses three or four men on the mouth to find out – from the smell or the taste – who drank her glass of Baileys, while she was playing snooker. Sex is even illustrated in car adverts like the Citroen advert in which the famous model/actress Claudia Schiffer strips off her clothes. In a research by Andrea Millwood Hargrave (1999), almost 40% of the viewers thought that advert-makers use too much sex to attract more viewers and to sell more

³⁴From Channel 5’s “*Streakers*”, 18 April 2000 and from ITV’s (Scottish Television) TV’s Naughtiest Blunders 19 April 2000.

products, and women in particular were not happy about the Citroen advert and thought it was “gratuitous”.³⁵

The progress of time did not only influence the morals of society but also it had its impact on religion. In Britain, the attitude towards blasphemy and profanity had experienced enormous changes, i.e., people are not embracing religion as their ancestors used to. Its influence on their lives had faded. This, by default, had its impact on the media in general and on television in particular. However, this change in people’s interest in religion and the development of a multi-cultural and a multi-religious society in Britain has made the censors’ job more demanding once more, especially after the recognition of these diverse cultures and different religions. In Britain, “there are now 4 million members of the Christian tradition, 1.5 million Muslims, a million people who are either Hindus or Sikhs and 300.000 Jews” (Craig 1999: 1). These members impose on TV film directors and programme-makers new duties. These millions of multi-cultural individuals and religions created new censorial activities for the television censors in Britain. Thus, “[They had] to take into consideration not only how words and their misuse can cause offence but also that misrepresentation of practices and clothing can equally be offensive... [For these] believers, their religion is not merely an academic acceptance of a creed or rules but something which dictates daily activities” (Ibid.).

³⁵ Hargrave’s “*Sex and Sensibility*”, 1999, from an online summary of the research page 2, found on: www.bsc.org.uk

However, religions can also be the subject of good comic material. One example in this regard could be the BBC's comic series *Goodness Gracious Me*, which is written by a multi-ethnic team. But this series, as well as other examples, was not banned although it presented a caricatured picture of a certain faith, maybe because they were written and acted by people from the very traditions, which were being pilloried.

To sum up, the strong grip of censors on TV films and programmes had been weakened by the change in peoples' concerns and by the sweeping technological developments of the last decade of the twentieth century. The important role of television was intensified by new technology in the 1990s and has led to the decline of many other forms of entertainment in recent times. The story of censorship in television is similar to that applied in other forms of the media. But it gained more weight because television reached more viewers, because of parents' concern for their children and because of its easy accessibility, i.e., the entertainment it can bring to ones own room or office without requiring the effort of going to the cinema or theatre.

9. Censorship on the Internet

The main rival to television, threatening to overtake it as the dominant form of home entertainment, is the computer. In the developing world, equipping houses with computers is becoming essential in modern life, just as it was a necessity to equip houses with television cables in the heyday of television. Internet use has grown rapidly, especially with the authorities imposing few restrictions, if at all.

Governments, individuals, organisations and corporations can set up web sites or open Internet accounts without the need for a governmental approval.

The crucial changes in communications in the 1990s, benefiting from the immediacy of telecommunications, made it possible to obtain all kinds of entertainment, knowledge and information at the press of a button. Sitting in his office or his room, the modern man or woman of the 1990s can search the Internet to look for any information or news he/she requires. The on-going development in technology, the 'split screen facility', means that the computer can also be used to watch television programmes, to send faxes, to send and receive electronic mail, saving a significant amount of time, or even to shop online from home.

Understanding its importance in education, most schools nowadays find it necessary to have access to the Internet in their computer labs. The Internet is becoming a preferred hobby for children and teenagers who are spending most of their free time using the computers to play games, to surf the Internet to listen to music, to chat online, or to gain more information about different topics.

Because of the important role it is playing in people's lives, computers are also subject to censorship from the authorities and private companies. Different forms of censorship are applied on Internet materials. These range from censorship on sexual material, threats, and offensive materials to cultures, religion, celebrities, public figures and to highly sensitive information concerning State security. These are seen as positive forms of censorship. In the music industry, for example, record

companies are signing contracts with agencies, 'Web police', to crack down on the "web piracy" that some online companies are applying. These 'pirate on-line companies' are breaching copyright laws by allowing their subscribers and listeners to download their favourite songs at digital quality without paying any money to the record company or to the star involved. The main aim of the 'Web police' companies is to provide a new digital commerce service to protect the contents of other web sites.³⁶ Famous singers and groups, such as, Britney Spears, Steps, Oasis and Back Street Boys are signing contracts with the 'Web police' to protect their songs from piracy.

Censorship of the Internet material is viewed by all those concerned as an important procedure to stop the harm that may result from the misuse of the web sites or the material available on the Internet. Calls for the imposition of some sort of censorship on the Internet are becoming louder these days, especially from some public figures and most parents. Many celebrities are complaining because their reputation is at stake. Their pictures are misused; their heads are being used on a nude body of a porn actress or model. Parents are imposing their own kind of censorship on their children's use of the Internet because they believe that there is too much pornography in the Internet and because of the high cost of the use of the Internet, which most parents see as a form of censorship in itself. Parents are convinced, however, that their censorship cannot resist the rapid development of the Internet nowadays, especially since the prices of connection have been very much reduced. In other words, parents cannot continue to prevent their children from visiting certain

³⁶ Quentin Sommerville, *Scotland on Sunday* newspaper, "News", 16 April 2000, p. 2.

web sites. Because they are not with their children all the time, parents are asking the authorities and the agencies involved, out of their concern for their children in the first place, to share with them the responsibility of better use of the Internet.

Governments intervene to block, use secret codes and to ban web sites when the misuse of highly sensitive information, such as the decoding of military information or of the passwords of banks facilitating access to the details, is illegally exposed. But decoding requires much skill and less likely to happen nowadays because of the complexity of the secretive procedures applied in such cases.

To sum up, the Internet is enjoying more freedom than any other media because of the authorities' unwillingness or lack of ability to impose any restrictions on its use. However, there are some rare situations where governments are forced to act through agencies or companies to protect the legal right of the public to benefit from the new technology. In most cases the restrictions and forms of censorship are seen as positive procedures and users of the Internet are accepting the fact that the Internet offers much more freedom of speech than do the Press, television, theatre or the cinema.

10. Conclusion

As has been discussed in this chapter, censorship has been practised since people began to express themselves in any written or verbal form (public speeches and sermons). The works of the great intellectuals were censored such as those of Socrates and Galileo. Parts of books were burnt or excluded, as in the case of King James' version of the Bible, and people were killed, tortured or banished for the sake of censorship. Over the years, the effects of censorship have been strongly felt in diverse cultures and societies. The interplay between the different forces in each society, such as politics, religion and morals, as well as the fickle nature of censorship has helped in its survival.

Undoubtedly, people's attitudes toward certain concepts have changed over the years. Accordingly, the standards of societies have changed too. The change, in Western societies in particular, has been toward a more tolerant approach in sexual material. One example that illustrates the change in people's attitudes is D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), which until 1959 was considered obscene. In Britain, the novel was never published in full and was suppressed on moral grounds. Even employees were threatened of instant dismissal if they brought *Lady Chatterley's Lover* to read at work.³⁷ An expurgated version of the novel was published in 1929. But in 1960, following Penguin's unabridged publication of the novel and the famous 'Trial of Lady Chatterley' in 1960, the full version of the novel became available in British bookshops.

³⁷ Employees in Nottingham hairdressing saloon were told: "If you bring in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* to read at work you'll be dismissed instantly". For more details, see Hairdresser: *Daily Telegraph*, 12 November 1960. It was also cited in O'Higgins (1972), p. 138.

In the media, censorship in performances of any kind – whether cinema, television, video or theatre – has been relaxed. There was a time – in 1965 – when the BBC’s head of Drama used to send memoranda, warning producers of giving careful consideration to needless “lengthy violence, references to sexual parts, underclothes and contraceptives, the showing of near nudity, the physical handling of someone with sex in mind, the portrayal of couples in bed, and the use of offensive words” (cited in O’Higgins 1972: 127). Few years later, these warnings became something of the past. The ‘permissive society’ of the sixties set up new values in the media. So, in 1963, for example, ‘bloody’ became regularly heard as well as ‘bugger’ in 1967 and ‘fuck’ in 1970. The portrayal of naked women was prohibited until the mid 1960s. Although films did show naked women’s breasts in the mid 1960s but these were non-European women.³⁸ By 1964 the ban on the appearance of naked women in films was gradually lifted.

In theatre, censorship was practised since the 18th century. It was meant to restrict playwrights and directors of attacking the government of the time or to restrict indecency. Theatrical censorship was amended gradually. It was either eased or applied strictly following the change in the community attitudes. The Theatres Act of 1968 put an end to Lord Chamberlain’s censorship that was practised since 1843.

Despite the huge changes that have taken place in all spheres of life, there has been a gradual return to censorship in literature and the media in Britain since 1979.³⁹ The main reasons for the return to censorship are preserving the political or social status

³⁸ See O’Higgins 1972, p. 161.

³⁹ Williams (1992), pp. 127-128.

quo even in the old and liberal democracies in the world. During the Gulf War in 1991, as cited in Suleiman (forthcoming), the BBC radio “drew up a proscribed list of records, including ‘Walk like an Egyptian’ by the Bangles, ‘Midnight at the Oasis’ by Maria Muldaur and ‘Billy don’t be a Hero’ by the Paper Lace”.

Censorship remains as controversial as it was in the early times of the Athenians, and there is nothing today to suggest that censorship will be less of an issue in the future. Even when concepts, such as freedom of speech, human rights, or democracy were introduced into the life of any society, the only result of these concepts “has been to make the business of censorship vastly more ingenious” (O’Higgins 1972: 14).

Censors and the rationale behind censorship have remained constant. Censors have never ceased to do the same job of *protecting* the morality of society, religion and, in particular, the existing political structure. In the final analysis, it seems that on the one hand, the main aim of censorship is to fulfil the political agenda of the existing regime and, on the other hand, it is clear that the opponents of censors and censorship have never stopped calling for a censorship-free society. They – the opponents of censors and censorship – will always express the opinion that art and literature are sacrificial lambs on the alter of censorship.

One fact is certain, however: the prevention of ideas seen as inimical to the common good should not be undertaken by suppression or destruction, but rather by research and discussion. Regimes can kill a man but certainly the ideas that he stands for cannot be killed. The more suppression there is, the more likely it is that censored

ideas will survive and re-emerge. Censors are human beings destined to die but the ideas they have prevented, discouraged or suppressed have lived to tell the story of their originators.

CHAPTER THREE

Chapter Three: Censorship in Jordan: The Translated

Media and Literature

1. Introduction

The focus in this chapter will be on censorship in Jordan, though cross-reference, where necessary, will be made to other Arab countries. Jordan was chosen as the case study for many reasons. First, because it is my home country, so my chances of having access to information were likely to be greater than in any other Arab state. In addition, Jordan had entered a new phase of its political life in 1989 by reinstating democracy. So, in an unsettled region, Jordan provides a good example of a promising democracy and political liberalisation. In theory, therefore, the collection of data and the discussion of censorship in a democratic country would not be, as I thought, a case of difficulty or embarrassment to anybody. Secondly, I could not travel elsewhere. I could not travel to other countries such as Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Palestine and Egypt for many different reasons.

One reason for not being able to travel to other Arab countries was because, generally, people in many Arab countries tend to be reluctant to talk about sensitive issues such as censorship. Furthermore, it was unlikely that I should be allowed access to information about censorship in the time allocated to this research. Regrettably, I was not allowed to travel to Syria and Iraq, let alone to discuss censorship with anyone in these countries because of my father's position of General in the Jordanian Armed Forces (the Arab Legion).

2. The Interviews

One way of understanding how censorship works in Jordan was to visit the country to collect data and to meet some of those who are concerned with censorship. It goes without saying that it is very difficult for many reasons even to think about doing all that without being in Jordan. One reason is the reluctance of most people to discuss censorship on the telephone, by post or e-mail – that is, if they admit its existence in the first place. Another reason is that some of the data needed are inaccessible to the public and to gain access I had to do two things. First, I had to be in Jordan because it was unlikely that the material required would be sent by post or e-mail. Second, I had to prove to whoever was responsible for the release of that material that I was a trustworthy person. Trustworthy to my interviewees meant one of three things. First, I was to be introduced by somebody who knew the interviewee. Second, I was to have an open permit from, for example officials, to visit the archives or the “dark rooms” of libraries, ministries and institutions and to use the material there. Third, and most importantly, I had to be related to someone who held or had held an important position in a government body.

So, by these standards, I was considered to be a trustworthy person because I met criterion number three. My father is a General in the Jordanian Armed Forces (the Arab Legion) and he had served as the Director of the Directorate of Moral Guidance, an important position in the Army,¹ for 13 years.

¹ This position is comparable to the Minister of Information in the government. There is usually a direct link between the Director of Moral Guidance and the Commander-in-Chief of the Jordanian Armed Forces (Arab Legion). All the news about the Armed Forces or anything likely to affect national security is channelled through him. He is, in fact, *the* censor in Jordan when it comes to news about the army in particular.

I prepared a list of the interviewees' names, which are given below. Everyone on the list has made his/her contribution to the socio-political life of Jordan.²

1. Dr Faiz Tarawneh: Director-General of the Committee of al-Hussein University. A former Prime Minister, a former Chief of the Royal Court (Hashemite Diwan), a former Foreign Minister, a former Ambassador to the United States. He served as the head of the Jordanian delegation in the peace negotiations with the Israelis. He was Prime Minister during the most critical period of the modern history of Jordan: the illness and death of King Hussein and the transition of power. He is very well known as an open-minded, educated and liberal politician.
2. 'Adnan Abu Odeh: King Abdullah's political adviser. He was the late King Hussein's political adviser as well, a former Jordanian permanent delegate to the United Nations, and a former Minister of Information. Abu Odeh is of Palestinian origin and is a witness of the two eras of politics in modern Jordan: Jordan under martial law before 1989; and democratic Jordan after 1989.
3. Abdul Karim el-Kabareti: Chairman of the Royal Court. A former Prime Minister and former Foreign Minister. One of the most controversial politicians in the modern history of Jordan because of the way in which he was introduced onto the Jordanian political scene and the way in which he was dismissed from it. He called for liberalisation in Jordan and tried to set an example himself by attending a play which criticised his policies and mocked some of his resolutions. During his time in office, the Ministry of Culture abolished the rules of censorship on theatre.
4. Mrs Leila Sharaf: a member of the Upper House and a former Minister of Information. Her husband was the late Abdul Hamid Sharaf, a former Jordanian Prime Minister. She is the first woman to hold an important political position: Minister of Information. After failing to implement her liberal policies, she resigned. People in Jordan refer to her as the woman who came to power 5 or 6 years ahead of her time.
5. Dr Qasim Abu 'Ayen: a former Minister of Culture and Sport, a former Director of the Directorate of Civil Service and a former Director of different Directorates within the Ministry of Education. He is a professor of Arabic and a poet. Had he been given more time as Minister of Culture, he would have left his mark on the cultural scene, as most critics in Jordan believe.
6. Dr Musa al-Kilani: A professor of English and the Director-General of *el-Urdun* newspaper. He is a former Ambassador to Bahrain and the Sudan, a former chief editor of the daily newspaper *ad-Dustour* and a former Director-General of the Jordanian Department of Press and Publications.
7. Abdullah el-Itum: Director-General of the Department of Press and Publication. His decisions have caused great controversy in Jordan. On the

² The titles listed were correct when the interviews took place in June–September 1999.

- one hand he has supported the release of some banned books and publications and on the other he has asked for other books, films and videos to be banned.
8. Dr Khalid el-Karaki: He is the Director-General of *al-Rai* newspaper and a Professor of Arabic. A former Chairman of the Royal Court and a former Minister of Culture. He always refers to himself as the first Minister of Culture to ease the rules of censorship on publications and the theatre.
 9. Nasser Judeh: a former Minister of Information, a former Director of Jordanian TV and Radio. He is Prince Hassan's – the ex-Crown Prince of Jordan – son-in-law.
 10. General Dr Qasim Mohammad Saleh, Director of the Directorate of Moral Guidance.
 11. Brigadier Dr Sami Suboh: the Vice-Mufti in the Jordanian Armed Forces (Arab Legion).
 12. Dr Mamduh al-Rosan: He is a professor of History and the Chairman of History Department, Yarmouk University, Jordan. He has published many books about the modern history of Jordan and the Arab world. He was expelled from Yarmouk University in 1986 after the riots of 1986 on suspicion that he was pro-Ba'athist. However, he was reappointed to the same University some years later. He has also taught in Kuwaiti and Iraqi universities.
 13. Mrs Lina al-Tall: The Chair of the Nur el-Hussein Foundation and a director and actress. She studied drama in America. She calls for modernising the theatre in Jordan. Some of her views have challenged the taboos of drama in Jordan.
 14. Hisham Yanis: A renowned Jordanian actor, scriptwriter and director. He established what critics in Jordan call "political theatre" or "black comedy drama". He broke the taboos in the Jordanian theatre by imitating the late King Hussein's voice, by impersonating several Arab leaders on stage and by challenging the anti-normalisation policy of the Jordanian Actors Union when he visited Israel after the peace agreement in 1994.
 15. Mohammed al-Shawaqfeh: A renowned Jordanian playwright and director. His plays are always a challenge to the censor. Contrary to Yanis's theatre, el-Shawaqfeh's drama condemns the peace process and any normalisation policies with the Israelis.
 16. Mrs Abir 'Isa: a renowned Jordanian actress. She was one of the first women to work as a professional actress.
 17. Mrs Amal ad-Dabbas: A renowned Jordanian actress. She formed a duo with Hisham Yanis in his political theatre.
 18. Basim Dalqamoni: A theatre director; he holds a Master's degree in Drama and works in the Deanship of Students' Affairs at Yarmouk University. He has massive experience in training drama students. He is the manager/director of the University Drama Group.
 19. Elias Sabila: A director, actor and a producer. During his long career, he experienced the two stages of censorship in Jordan: before and after 1989.
 20. Dr Abdullah Shunnaq: President of the Jordanian Translation Association (JTA), founder member of the JTA, executive member of the Arab

- Translators' Federation (ATF), and an Assistant Professor of Translation at Yarmouk University.
21. Amjad Hadad: Polling Centre Director, *The Arab Daily* newspaper, which is the first private daily newspaper in Jordan.
 22. Hani el-Horani: the chairman of al-Urdon al-Jadid Research Centre.
 23. The Press Attaché in the American Embassy in Amman. The reason behind this choice was to discover how foreign organisations operated within the boundaries of censorship in Jordan, where the line, if any, was drawn for them and who drew that line.
 24. Mrs Mahasen el-Imam: A former chief editor of *el-Bilad* newspaper and a former journalist for *al-Dustour* newspaper. She was chosen for this thesis because she was a victim of censorship. Mrs Imam was dismissed from her job at *el-Bilad* after publishing an article about some of the members of the Royal family.
 25. Nidal Mansur: Chief editor of *al-Hadath* weekly newspaper. His newspaper ventures into forbidden territory and discusses sensitive topics in Jordan without suffering the consequences of censorship expected in these cases. Many believe that Mr Mansur has benefited from his friendship with ex-Prime Minister Kabareti.
 26. Monsignor Abdul Ra'uf an-Najjar: A member of the Board of Censors in the Department of the Press and Publications (DPP); he represents the Christian view in the DPP.
 27. Judge Tawfiq el-Qaisi: The judge who ruled in many of the Press Code cases.

I divided my interviewees into five categories: politicians, journalists, Judge Tawfiq el-Qaisi, Monsignor Abdul Ra'uf al-Najjar (the Christian member of the Board of Censors in DPP), and artists. The artists were chosen mainly from the theatrical sector, that is, playwrights, stage-actors and actresses, and directors.

On paper the names that I chose were ideal and covered nearly every aspect of censorship. All I hoped to do was to be able to interview everyone on the list. However, it was not to be. Unfortunately, some of them were either unavailable or refused to be interviewed, such as Judge el-Qaisi, or did not have time to be interviewed, as his secretary told me. I had to go to his office three times without an appointment, which was the only way to persuade him to be interviewed, but I failed

to see him. He, as I understood later, did not want to be interviewed because he did not normally speak to anybody about his work. Monsignor al-Najjar was not available at the time of my visit to Jordan. He was also very busy. Although Nasser Judeh agreed to be interviewed at first, the many duties he had to fulfil made it impossible for him to set a time for the interview. I was not able to interview the American Press attaché. I tried to contact her several times but I was not put through to her. Instead, I was asked to leave my telephone numbers with the switchboard. Despite my desperate efforts to contact her again, the American Press attaché never called back. I could not interview the Chief of the Royal Court (Hashemite Diwan), Mr el-Kabareti. In fact, his secretary refused to put me through to him five times. Even when I tried the Royal Court operator, who assured me that Mr el-Kabareti was in his office, his secretary insisted that he was not. I was told the same story when I telephoned the operator at his house.

Mrs Abir 'Isa was not available at the time of the interviews. Nidal Mansur accepted to be interviewed, after visiting him in his office at *al-Hadath* newspaper, but apologised later because he had to leave for Morocco. Dr Karaki agreed to be interviewed after my father telephoned him. I saw him for nearly ten minutes and then he had to leave for a meeting, promising to see me again. Although I tried to contact him several times after that, his secretary insisted that he was very busy and took my telephone number to call back, which she never did. Hani el-Hourani was not able to come to the interview at the last minute because of illness. Nevertheless, he invited me, while in his office, to feel free to look at the wide range of books and

references that he had, and to borrow all that I could find which was related to my research.

As for the rest on my list, I succeeded in interviewing all of them, though it must be said that most of them asked me to stop recording at certain times. Only one person accepted to be interviewed and then refused to allow her interview to be recorded. She asked me not to include her name in the list. However, she gave me permission to refer to her by Ms A. It is worth mentioning here that I had to turn to my father to arrange some of the interviews. On several occasions he had to intervene and to telephone some of the interviewees to persuade them when I sensed their reluctance. Sometimes my father had to be present when the interviews took place. At other times he introduced me to the interviewee and then left when he felt that his presence put pressure on the interviewee. Once or twice my father told me not to mention his name if I wanted my interviews to take place. He wanted to give the interviewees a free rein to express themselves without being intimidated by his position.

The laws of censorship in Jordan are very intricate because of the interplay of many factors such as politics, religion, traditions, democracy, liberalisation, modernisation, press codes, publication laws, and the impact of the regional and international changes, among other things. Hence, in order to break down these interrelated topics, one way of discussing what *is* censored is to highlight what is *not* censored. I was advised by some of my first interviewees to opt for the word democracy instead of censorship if I wanted my interviews to be accomplished because censorship is

normally opposed to democracy in Jordan.³ The intention behind this is to imply that censorship does not exist in Jordan because it is a democratic country with democratic institutions, such as the Upper and Lower Houses. Democracy was reinstated in Jordan in 1989. If we were to accept this view, however, we should accept that other democracies, such as Britain, are censorship-free societies, which is not true, as the discussion in Chapter 2 has shown. The advice to replace censorship with democracy is in itself an example of censorship. Those who claim that Jordan is a censorship-free country censor themselves. Their argument becomes contradictory. If Jordan is truly a democracy, why did I have to be a trustworthy person, as they told me when I commenced my field research, to be able to discuss censorship and to have the interviews? Why should people of high status use euphemisms or look for linguistic loopholes – to replace the word censorship with the word democracy – to allow me to interview them? The people whom I interviewed in Jordan are part of the elite and they are unlikely to be harmed or to divulge official secrets.

To sum up, some *personal information* that the interviewees needed before the interviews was in itself an awareness of censorship. The fact that my father had to secure most of the interviews on my behalf and that he had to be present at some shows the subtle ways in which censorship works in Jordan. The replacement of the word censorship with democracy is only a camouflage or “Euphemism, [which] is the subtlest form of censorship” (Warspeak 1991: 167).

³ Interview with Ms A.

The main purpose of the interviews as well as this chapter is to discern the definition and nature of censorship in translation. The main focus in discussing the definition and nature of censorship will relate to politics and culture.

3. The Political Order in Jordan and Political Relationships

3.1 The King

The Jordanian constitution reserves a high place for the King. Article (1) in the Constitution in Jordan states that the system of government is a “parliamentary hereditary monarchy”. The King is vested with authority over the other branches of power in the country, that is, the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. The King has the right (Article 35) to appoint the Prime Minister and to dismiss the Cabinet. He has the right also to appoint the Upper House, the Senate or the Council of Notables and appoints its President (Article 36). The King has the right to dissolve the elected Council of Representatives (Lower House) (Article 34), but if such an action were taken by the King, “general elections shall be held so that the new council will meet in extraordinary session within a period not exceeding four months from the date of dissolution” (Article 73). The King is the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (Article 32) and he has the power to declare war (Article 33). All decisions of the Cabinet, judgment and currency are issued in the King’s name. The King is immune from all manner of liability for his acts (Article 30). Judges are appointed or dismissed by a Royal Decree (Article 98). Any amendment of the constitution may come into effect only by the King’s approval (Article 126). However, despite all these powers that the King enjoys, Article 24 states that the “people are the source of power”.

3.2 The Royal Court (Hashemite Diwan)

The head of the Royal Court is given the title of Chief of the Royal Court, and is in most cases a member of one of the renowned families in Jordan. “[N]o comparable institution exists in the west ... [the] advisory function [of the Royal Court] is similar to that of the office of the White House Chief of Staff in America” (Mutawi 1989: 12). The Royal Court served as a liaison between the King and those sectors of the population via the Tribal Council Department. A Press and Media Department was established in the Royal Court, which is responsible, in co-operation with the Directorate of Moral Guidance in the Armed Forces, for all the information about the King’s visits and news. The greater the influence of the Chief of the Royal Court is the greater the importance of the role of the Royal Court in politics.

3.3 The Cabinet and the Army

Contrary to the situation in the West, the Jordanian Prime Minister is appointed and dismissed by the King. Political parties do not form governments nor determine the policies of the country. The King is of overriding importance in decision-making in Jordan, as discussed above, and the Prime Minister’s role is to execute this policy. The King confirms the choice of ministers in the Cabinet as well. However, it is the government, in most cases, that is exposed to all kinds of criticism from the masses and not the Palace or the King. The criticism may lead to changes in the government but not necessarily in policy. The change in the government is forced by national, regional or international need, for example, the need to have good relations with the Syrians or the Iraqis. In this respect most of the Jordanian governments “act as a most important *shock absorber* in times of crisis” (Susser 1994: 6).

The most important positions in the government are the Ministries of the Interior, Foreign Affairs and Information. Under the Ministry of Information comes the Department of Press and Publication, which *controls* all publications and films. As for the Minister of Defence, it became a position held by the Prime Minister, regardless of his military experience. The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces is the important figure in the Army and he has a direct line to the King, who is the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

The army in Jordan is the mainstay of the government. It is an executive tool of the government policy although it does not formulate it. The Army's unswerving loyalty to the King was demonstrated on many occasions such as when Nabulsi's government challenged the status quo in 1957, the unsuccessful coups in the early stages of the reign of King Hussein and in the incidents of "black September" of 1970. The Army does not hold political power in Jordan compared with other Arab states, as General Saleh mentions.⁴ It has never been more than an instrument of stability, for it is not a tool of suppression or change. The Army works as a censor through the Directorate of Moral Guidance, which censors all the news or translated news about the Army, the country and the King. All news must be approved by the Director of the Directorate of Moral Guidance before being published or broadcast. It works closely with the Press and Media Department in the Royal Court to ensure that all news that is deemed *dangerous* to the safety and security of the State is strictly banned.

⁴ Interview with General Qasim Saleh.

4. The Relationship between Power and Culture in Jordan

The Ministry of Culture and Media in Jordan is an important part of the government. Its regulations stem from and serve the political agenda of the government of the day and the appointment of the Minister of Culture and Media is a political decision. Over the years, some kind of relationship has been established between the intellectuals and thinkers and the politicians. Most of the time the relationship is unilateral, that is, politicians are usually in a higher position, firmly controlling the scene. However, the form and scope of popular participation in politics are usually determined by the cultural norms that are prevalent in society. Nevertheless, politics always dominates the scene. Consequently, the cultural institutions are subsidiary bodies of the political institutions. This creates a paradoxical situation and leads to mixed views about the relationship between the intellectuals and the government. Accordingly, the general public and critics classify the intellectuals into two groups and journalists into four groups.

The intellectuals are classified into those who adopt a pro-government policy and those who, relatively speaking, adopt an anti-government policy. The first group consists of the intellectuals who become, within the political atmosphere, factota or, at best, partisans of the government. Although they are supported and, sometimes, praised by the government, they are unpopular with the general public. The second group has the support of the masses, although in most situations it is constrained by the government. Therefore, the ability of the anti-government intellectuals to resist some of the political decisions, or lobby against the official censors' decisions in literature, let alone in politics, is fragile. Their ability is weakened by fear of the

overt and covert forms of censorship imposed by the government. This fear colours the lives of most people of letters, such as the concern about the various kinds of pressure, the codes and laws that handicap literary achievement and lead to the loss of jobs, imprisonment, torture or banishment.

Journalists, as Hilmi al-Asmar mentions, are classified under four headings:⁵ the first are the members of the “Government sheep [factota] club or the yes-men journalists”. The second are those protected by a man in power. The third are members of a strong party. The fourth are independent journalists and those who depend on their “free pen” to defend themselves.

The pro-government intellectuals and the yes-men journalists dominate the cultural scene nowadays. Their motto is “The King is Dead long live the King”. They change loyalty easily and the highest bidder wins their loyalty. Accordingly, politicians have indirectly become the real pivotal performers on the cultural scene and it has become easier than ever to impose the censors’ decisions without any serious opposition.

5. Political Censorship: Its Nature and History

Owing to the difficulties and much suffering that led to the forming of most of the regimes in the Arab states after the colonial era, politics dominated all other aspects of life in the Arab world. Any discussion of cultural, religious or economic issues is related to political matters. The changes in politics in the Arab countries force

⁵ Hilmi al-Asmar, a Jordanian journalist, speaking to *al-Quds al-Arabi* daily newspaper (London), 1 June 2000, (my translation).

changes throughout society. The political system in most Arab countries is defined as a specific pattern of political relationships with governments or regimes, which aim to serve the existing political system and to *secure* stability in the countries. The main aim of the political system in Jordan is to assert the legitimacy of the monarchy and to *safeguard* the highest possible level of popular satisfaction.

To understand the notion of censorship we need to discuss the relationship between the structure and institutions of power in Jordan. However, the lack of references on censorship of translation in Jordan, the denial of the existence of censorship and the reluctance of most people who are connected with censorship to discuss it leaves the researcher with one option, that is, to look for and shed light on what is not censored to understand how censorship works.

5.1 The Jordanian Political Scene

Maybe more than any other Arab country in the Middle East, Jordan had undergone a difficult birth at the end of the First World War. Major events led to the birth of Transjordan, namely the Great Arab Revolt in 1916 against the rule of the Ottoman Turks, the Sykes–Picot agreement in 1916 and the Balfour Declaration in 1917. After its establishment, Jordan did not experience the deadly change of power, as happened in some Arab states. However, owing to internal and external challenges, the situation remained unstable in Jordan for many years. Important political decisions were taken which led to the application of different forms of censorship in the country. From this perspective, the historical background is essential to the

discussion of censorship.

The political decisions constituted, over the years, grounds for the internal and external opposition groups to launch their attacks and to create doubts about the legitimacy of the Jordanian state and its leaders. The monarchy in Jordan – from Sharif Hussein to King Hussein – were seen as traitors and servants of the British and Israeli policies, a serious accusation that could challenge the legitimacy of any leadership in the Arab world. Understandably, any books, poems, articles, newspapers and magazines that contained any implicit or explicit accusations against the Royal Family were strictly banned and those who circulated them were punished.

In 1923, still under the British mandate, Emir Abdullah announced his first *constitutional* government. Transjordan was recognised as independent after the 1928 treaty with the British. The importance of 1928, as far as this work is concerned, lies in the fact that it “brought to a close the period of Abdullah’s direct rule through an Executive Council and inaugurated the slow evolution of constitutional political processes, on the western model, that placed some limitations upon the royal authority” (Harris 1950: 16). In May 1946, Emir Abdullah established the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. He was proclaimed King. The Organic Law of 1928 was replaced with the constitution.

After the Israeli occupation of some of the land of Palestine, Jordan was left with the Old City of Jerusalem and the central parts of Palestine. In 1950 a union between the two banks of Jordan was formed and elections took place for the council of

representatives that gave the Palestinians the same number of seats as the East Jordanians.

King Abdullah I's assassination in 1951 in Jerusalem came at a time when his country was in need of his political experience. King Talal had to deal with a massive inheritance: a large number of refugees from Palestine, a country with meagre resources and the longest Arab border with Israel. During his short period in power, King Talal managed to introduce the new constitution in 1952. King Talal had to abdicate the Throne in favour of his son Hussein because of mental illness, after being called upon to do so by the Parliament's long-debated decision.

To sum up, the importance of the historical background of the period between 1921 and 1952 was its impact on the democracy that Emir Abdullah I was trying to introduce into the country. King Abdullah I was influenced by his experience in Istanbul, where he was brought up.

By the time his father Sharif Hussein returned to Hejaz in 1908 [he was exiled by Sultan Abdul Hamid to Istanbul in 1893], Abdullah was already a member of the Turkish Parliament and his father's right hand man in the affairs of the state.

(Lunt 1989: xxvi)

Thus, in 1923, two years after establishing the Emirate of Transjordan, "the first parliamentary election bill was adopted ... and the first law on parties [was adopted] in 1928. At the first meeting of the representatives of the people, they issued the 1928 charter" (Tarawneh 1996: 109). Although the treaty of 1928 limited the powers of the Emir, it was a setback in the intended democratic life of the country for it did not enable the people to exercise their role in the government. Before 1921 and 1946

there was no elected legislative authority, and it was the government, or the executive power, which ran the country. Dr Musa al-Kilani emphasised this view by adding that “The philosophy in the state was whoever possesses the power is in control of everything. This may explain the relative weight of the legislative and the judiciary powers in the Jordanian state” (al-Kilani 1996: 96).

The forms of censorship practised between 1921 and 1952 were mainly political, religious and moral. Ostensibly, the main aim of King Abdullah I and his governments was to protect the stability and political order in the young country. King Abdullah I’s era was a one-man rule whose power was based mainly on historical and religious factors. He was the descendant of Prophet Muhammad. This reality imposed on him a commitment to Arab traditions and culture as well a religious commitment to Islam and Christianity. The cultural and religious commitments developed over time into censors.

5.2 New King, New Era: The Years of Survival

In May 1953 King Hussein assumed his constitutional powers. The young King had to rule a small country without many resources in a critical era of the modern history of the Arab world, especially the consequences of the Palestine war of 1948. During the first twenty years of his rule, the young monarch was destined to face many challenges and many more difficult times. The most important challenges were the stability of the Kingdom, nationalism and the Israeli occupation of Palestine, which affected not only Jordan but also the whole Arab world. All this required strict government policies.

On his ascent to the throne, as General Saleh states in his interview, King Hussein had to deal with the changing personnel and politics that were arriving on the scene in the Arab countries as well as elsewhere and their effect on Jordan. The most notable change, as far as Jordan was concerned, was the military coup d'état in 1952 that brought Nasser into power in Egypt and led to the great rivalry between Saudi Arabia, Syria and Egypt to dominate the Arab world.⁶

Nasser became very popular among the Egyptians and later among all Arabs. His views on Arab nationalism swept the entire Arab world. Nasserites and Ba'athists gained support throughout Jordan, especially in its refugee camps. Both parties were keen to dominate the political arena in the country. The seriousness of the matter had its impact on decision-making in Jordan, which was demonstrated by the Jordanian hesitancy to join the Baghdad Pact of 1955, fearing a threat to the country's stability and throne.

Another example was when the Communists and Ba'athists tried to take advantage of the Jordanian Prime Minister of the time, Fawzi al-Mulki's

Liberal-socialist ideas then popular in the west ... [by] freeing the press [and] removing the restrictions imposed during Abdullah's more conservative regime.... [The result was that King Hussein] decided to replace Fawzi by Samir Rifai, a more cautious and conservative politician, who shut down the communist newspaper, and made the others toe the line. (Lunt 1989: 19–20)

In addition to the influence of Arab nationalism and some Arab regimes on Jordanian policy, there was the major effect of the Palestinian problem. In the aftermath of the

⁶ Interview with General Qasim Saleh.

defeat in Palestine in 1948, great numbers of Palestinians fled their homes and land, and came to the East Bank of the River Jordan. The Palestinian issue was a major concern not only to King Hussein but also to all the Hashemites. Sharif Hussein “abdicated his throne ... because he could not bring himself to accept a separation of Palestine from the rest of the Arab homeland” (King Abdullah 1981: xiii). The importance of Palestine to the Hashemite family, as General Saleh states, could be understood also from the insistence of Sharif Hussein to be buried in Palestine near al-Aqsa Mosque. Sharif Hussein meant to emphasise the strong bonds and unity between two of the holiest mosques in Islam: Kaaba and al-Aqsa Mosque, reminding the Arabs of the ascension to the seventh heaven by his ancestor, Prophet Muhammad.⁷ The Palestinian issue continued to be a crucial factor that affected Jordanian policy locally and internationally. The impact of the Palestinian presence on Jordanian politics, as Aruri (1972: 188) explains, could be illustrated in many events that took place during the mid-1950s, such as “the Anglo-Jordanian treaty, the rejection of Baghdad Pact, the dismissal of Glubb and the ultimate victory of the opposition in late 1956 ...”.

Like the political parties of the 1950s, the formation of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) produced yet another challenge to the Jordanian government. However, it was more serious this time. At one stage, even Jordan’s sovereignty was threatened. In addition, retaliation by Israel was inevitable because of the PLO’s raids into that country. “Soon after its creation the PLO was infiltrated by radical elements and was used against the Jordanian government by hostile countries

⁷ Interview with General Qasim Saleh.

Criticism of King Hussein by the Palestinians was encouraged by Syria and Egypt” (Mutawi 1987: 41). In spite of King Hussein’s efforts to create equal opportunities for all citizens in Jordan, the King’s enemies, both within the country and elsewhere in the Arab world, used the Palestinian cause to attack him. Consequently, Jordan’s foreign policy was constrained from all sides. The pressure mounted enormously on the King and was demonstrated by Jordan being left with no option but to fight side by side with the Arabs in the Six–Day War of 1967.⁸

Jordanian politics before the Arab–Israeli war in 1967 was influenced by many internal and external factors. Internally, there was the Jordanian – PLO conflict, which led to a wave of protest that swept the country. Externally, there was the Jordanian–Egyptian rift.⁹ The effects on political decisions were immediate. Internally, Wasfi al-Tall, the Jordanian Prime Minister, took instantaneous action. He “swiftly moved to dissolve the Parliament and impose martial law. The wave of protest was crushed and the PLO was utterly suppressed ...” (Mutawi 1987: 81). On the Arab front, relations with Syria and Egypt were very tense. Al-Tall

Asked for the dismissal of the Parliament and the King granted his request ...[t]his gave the government a free hand to deal with the domestic situation [as well as the evolving matters on the Arab front without the need to go back to the Parliament].
(ibid.)

To sum up, the democratic forces in Jordan during the 1950s and 1960s were very active, in comparison with the neighbouring countries, and to a certain extent, political pluralism was practised. The first sign of the King’s use of power was the dismissal of Glubb Pasha in 1956. The King became the Supreme Commander of the

⁸ *H. M. King Hussein*, 1978, pp. 208–209

⁹ For more details on this issue, see James Lunt 1989, Asher Susser 1994 and Samir Mutawi 1987.

Arab Legion (Jordanian Armed Forces). Owing to its small size, meagre resources and short history compared with the neighbouring countries, Jordan was vulnerable to external influences and it could not put forward its own political views to the general public inside and outside its territory. Examples of the country's vulnerability were the expansion of the parties that originated in Damascus, Cairo and Beirut in the early 1950s. In addition, the Arab national movement, nurtured and sponsored by Nasser of Egypt, was well received in Jordan. Nasserism flourished there because of the numerous numbers of Jordanian youth who went to study at universities in Cairo and Damascus (the first Jordanian university, the University of Jordan, was established in 1962).

Discussions over the formation of parties were very lively in the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s. General elections were held in 1956. Political pluralism was crowned by the victory of the left and the appointment of Suleiman al-Nabulsi, the leader of the National Socialist Party, as Prime Minister.

Dr al-Rosan says in the interview that there were many reasons for the interruption of democracy. One was the interference by some neighbouring countries, particularly Syria and Egypt, in Jordan's domestic policies. A second reason was the adoption of Nasserism in Jordan by the radical parties. Some of the decisions made by the King reflected the effect of these factors on the country. The King, for example, replaced Prime Minister Mulki with Rifa'i following the former's liberal-socialist ideas that enabled the Ba'athist and the Communists to take full advantage of the situation. King Hussein also dismissed Nabulsi's government in 1957 because he was aware of

the threat from Nabulsi's party. Consequently, all parties were banned and martial law was imposed. When the MPs passed a vote of no-confidence in the government of Prime Minister Samir Rifai, Parliament was dissolved and several members were arrested.¹⁰

The 1970s, after the feda'yeen had departed from Jordan, were a time for rehabilitation, rebuilding and repair at all levels: the army, the police, electricity, water supply, rebuilding damaged houses and providing medical care. However, the wounds that the clashes of 1970 had left on the psychology of those involved needed more time to heal. Martial law continued to exist.

5.3 Jordan in and after 1989

The 1980s were important for two main events: the disengagement with the Palestinians in 1988 and the call for general elections in 1989. The discussion of democracy in Jordan is beyond the scope of this work. Its introduction here is to trace its influence on the political and cultural life in the country and in due course its impact on imposing or abolishing censorship laws.

Jordan had to accommodate itself to the New World Order, which brought with it new political terminology such as freedom of speech, privatisation, globalisation, the promotion of a free market economy, the emphasis on human rights, democracy and political pluralism. This process was enhanced by domestic and international factors. Internally, democracy was a result of the overlap of two factors: first, the political –

¹⁰ Interview with Dr Mamduh al-Rosan.

economic challenges and frustration, demonstrated by the social unrest of April 1989 in southern Jordan and second, the Jordanian–Palestinian relationship, which could be regarded as internal and external factors simultaneously. The Palestinian–Jordanian–Israeli relationship was

Instrumental in introducing a relative democratic liberalisation in Jordan ... the change in the Israeli position [making secret–direct contacts with the Palestinians] ... affected not only the way the parliamentary elections were handled, but also affected the way the government in Jordan viewed the function of the relative democratic openness and liberalisation.

(Razzaz 1996: 51–52)

On the international level, some scholars in Jordan, such as Dr Musa al-Kilani,¹¹ say that democracy in Jordan was in response to the waves of democratisation that occurred in the different parts of the world, just three months before the Jordanian parliamentary elections on 8 November 1989. However, according to General Saleh, though the international factors were important, one must not overlook the fact that democratisation was in the minds of the Hashemite rulers all the time. Right from the establishment of the Emirate in 1921, King (then Prince) Abdullah tried to introduce *forms* of democracy into the country – though it has to be said that the term democracy as used then was different from that of today. Democracy was used to suit the politics of the day. General Saleh states in the interview that the blame for the interruption of democracy in Jordan was placed on two groups. First, the neighbouring Arab countries were apprehensive of democracy whenever it was applied in Jordan. They had the ability to harass Jordan because of their economic and military power, and demographic superiority. One example in this regard was the

¹¹ Interview with Dr Musa al-Kilani.

continued meetings between Saddam Hussein of Iraq and the late Hafiz Assad of Syria, just before democracy was relaunched in Jordan, which was a sign that Jordan was overstepping the limits. Second, the rise of political parties in Jordan that was actually linked to bodies outside Jordan.¹²

The application of democracy was soon to bear fruit. Although it was gradual, it brought about many changes in the various aspects of Jordanian society. Consequently, many censorship laws were relaxed. King Hussein's intention of supporting the democratic trend in Jordan was very clear when he appointed Prime Minister his cousin Prince Zaid bin Shaker, who is known for his honesty. This choice was justified by the fact that this Prime Minister supervised the fairest elections ever witnessed in Jordan, which was crowned by the participation of all the groups in the country. This was the first sign of democratisation in its full sense and the first step towards abolishing many forms of censorship.

The Jordanian government's careful approach to democracy was reflected in the fact that it conducted parliamentary elections without lifting the ban on political parties or ending martial law. The cautious approach by the government paid off. In 1991, two years after the elections, the people's demands for political pluralism were met. Political pluralism was institutionalised with the passing of the Political Parties Law

¹² Interview with General Qasim Saleh.

No. 32/1992.¹³ The political scene in Jordan experienced constant changes: martial law was abolished, and the Jordanian National Charter was endorsed in 1991.¹⁴

The major setback, however, in the first stages of democracy in Jordan was the amendments to the Press Code. Discussions on the issue of the Press Code took place and resulted in some amendments that caused resentment among journalists. Even worse, in 1993 the government forced the introduction of a new Press Law, which constituted a setback in the democratisation. The new Press Law caused uproar in the country and led to the intervention of the King himself to settle the matter. However, the event that had the major impact on democracy in Jordan was the peace treaty with Israel in October 1994, which marked a new phase of Jordan's political history and led to new obligations towards the country's old enemy and new friend, Israel.

To sum up, censorship in Jordan followed the main political stream of the time. Being a small country with meagre resources, Jordan had to fashion its policies on censorship with an eye to both external and internal factors. Consequently, political censorship was either eased or applied strictly in Jordan to prevent, or at least to reduce as much as possible, the influence of external factors on Jordanian policies. The main decisive criterion in applying or easing political censorship is whether or not a certain action is considered to be a threat to the throne and the stability of the country. The influence of Nasserites and Ba'athists on Jordanian decision-making,

¹³ However, the executive power in Jordan still does not allow various opinions to be aired in the mass media. Consequently, these parties are denied the opportunity to reach more people.

¹⁴ "Unfortunately [the Jordanian Constitution] was not endorsed by the House of Representatives and the way it was passed does not give the impression that it was constitutional" (al-Kilani 1996: 96–97).

for example, was demonstrated by the authorities' indecision to join the Baghdad Pact of 1955. Had the authorities decided to join, the stability of the country would have been endangered. Internally, the Palestinian influence on the decision-making was demonstrated by King Hussein's decision to fight alongside the Arabs in the 1967 war. In both examples, censorship laws were relaxed and the authorities, probably against one's expectations, had to conform to the overwhelming support for Nasserism and Ba'athism.

However, when the authorities felt that there was no threat to the country's stability or throne, political censorship was strictly applied. For example, in the 1970s the Jordanian authorities dismissed Parliament, closed down the political parties' newspapers and severed the country's relations with Syria and Iraq.

The overlap of external and internal factors played a major role in King Hussein's decision to reinstate democracy in 1989. The call for the general elections in November 1989 was not a mere coincidence. It was a response to external and internal factors. Externally, the Jordanian Parliamentary elections took place just three months after the waves of democratisation occurred in different parts of the world. Internally, the social unrest of April 1989 in southern Jordan accelerated the rate of change. Therefore, Jordan's policies were to be fashioned to accommodate the country to what came to be known as the New World Order. In doing so, political pluralism was institutionalised, martial law was abolished and the Jordanian Charter was endorsed. However, despite the gradual relaxation of the laws of censorship in the first years of democracy, censorship laws were not abolished completely. The

government of 1993 forced a new Press Law through Parliament and they made some amendments to it. The political censorship was to be fashioned yet again after the peace treaty with Israel and here it was applied differently. On the one hand, the news about meetings with Israeli officials, for example, was no longer censored. On the other hand, anti-peace treaty views were censored.

Nearly all interviewees highlighted the influence of external and internal factors in applying political censorship in Jordan. Most of the interviewees gave descriptive views of the Jordanian political scene. However, a few of them justified the exercise of rule by the King and the political elite.

6. The Cultural Scene in Jordan

6.1 People, Language and Religion

The majority of the population in Jordan are Arab: bedouins and peasants. After the calamity of 1948, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians settled in Jordan. There are other minorities such as the Circassians and the Chechens. The official language in Jordan is Arabic although English is the second language. Over the years, the shift towards the acceptance of the use of the English language was recognisable in Jordan in spite of the resistance of some national movements in the region to the language of the coloniser.

English is widely spoken in Jordan especially in the towns and cities. In the media, Jordanian TV has three channels, one of which, Channel 2, broadcasts in English. Moreover, there are English-language daily newspapers such as the *Jordan Times*,

which was founded in 1975, and *The Arab Daily*, which was founded in 1999. The main target of the English daily newspapers is Amman's diplomatic corps and those who have been Western oriented, that is, those who were educated in, or have lived in or are interested by Western culture. The English daily newspapers, particularly the *Jordan Times*, have status, prestige and, to some degree, considerable protection, which has given them more freedom in publishing and discussing sensitive issues, something which is not found in the Arabic language daily newspapers. In other words, the ceiling of freedom for English daily newspapers is higher than that for the Arabic newspapers. The same piece of news could be published in the daily newspapers, but with more details – the details that the regime does not want all people to know – in *The Jordan Times*, for example.

The same thing could be said about all other forms of literature. Sensitive, or what could be considered *dangerous* issues are usually published in English. The following two examples illustrate this clearly.¹⁵ The first example is Adnan Abu Odeh's book (1999): *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process*. The second example is King Abdullah II's interview with the American daily newspaper *The New York Times*, 6 February 2000. Abu Odeh's book describes the relationship between the Jordanians and Palestinians in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, (indigenous Jordanians and the Jordanians of Palestinian origin as some in Jordan like to call them). The book is written in English and it is unlikely to be translated into Arabic, as Abu Odeh alluded in my interview with him. The reason behind the refusal to translate the book into Arabic is the

¹⁵ I am indebted to professor Suleiman who drew my attention to King Abdullah II's interview in *The New York Times*.

author's choice first and foremost. However, it goes without saying that the author targeted the educated, bilingual Arabic/English, and English-speaking readership in the world as well as in Jordan, namely those who live in the western areas of Amman and those of similar background in the big Jordanian cities. His choice of language could be described as a *precautionary* step, or self-defence step, that was meant to save the author the heated debate and strong protest that the topic was bound to provoke. In other words there were things in the book which, if said in Arabic, could upset, to say the least, certain sectors of society – the Eastern Jordanians (indigenous Jordanians) – which is the last thing the new monarch, his government and Adnan Abu Odeh wanted to do at this time in Jordanian history. However what Abu Odeh expected, happened. The book provoked strong protest from not only the Eastern Jordanians but also from the Palestinians, which resulted in Abu Odeh's resignation (some say dismissal), from his post as the King's Political Adviser. The content of the book created heated discussions in the Jordanian parliament and among the general public. Knowledge of the book in Jordan was spread by reviews and comments. Abu Odeh helped this process with a lecture that he gave on the book. In other words, not everyone reacted because they had read the book, but because they had listened to, or read about, responses to it.

The sensitivity of the topic discussed in Abu Odeh's book forced the application of different forms of censorship. First, self-censorship, which the author had imposed on himself by opting to write in English. Second, socio-political censorship, which considered the topic taboo in Jordan because it revived the memories of the deadly clashes between the Palestinians and the Jordanians between 1968 and 1970. The

fear, the reluctance and refusal of many historians in Jordan to write about the Palestinian–Jordanian relationship or the conflict of 1970 emphasise this point. I myself was not allowed to publish, and no publisher accepted for publication, the translation of a book about the conflict of 1970 in Jordan, *A Study in Political Violence: The Jordanian Internal War of 1968–1971* by Randa N. Mukhar.¹⁶

Abu Odeh's choice of language leaves the door wide open for many questions as far as censorship and translation are concerned. Why should Abu Odeh, the King's Political Adviser, be constrained by censorship? The King, at the end of the day, protects him. Moreover, had he not been the King's Political Adviser, would he have been able to publish the book? What prevented him from translating, or having the book translated into Arabic? Why did he not write it in Arabic in the first place? Unfortunately, when I interviewed Abu Odeh in Amman, in the summer of 1999, his book was not yet published and he was not willing to say much about it. However, it has to be said that though Abu Odeh would have addressed a wider Jordanian and Arab audience by writing in Arabic, there is no doubt that he was very aware of the risks of that choice. Maybe he would have been accused of *endangering* the political *stability* of the country and that is why he wrote the book in English. His fears were justified days after the book appeared in English and was available in the market. Obviously, judging by the content of the book, Abu Odeh opted for English because he knew that his audience would be smaller. English was his choice because it is the second language in Jordan.

¹⁶ The book was submitted as part fulfilment of the requirements of a Master of Arts degree: Political Science Department, American University of Beirut, 1978.

The second example is the *New York Times* interview with King Abdullah II on 6 February 2000. The interview was not mentioned, let alone translated, in any of the Jordanian daily newspapers. Nearly a month later, *al-Hadath*, the Jordanian weekly newspaper, decided to act. The interview was translated into two parts. The King's interview poses, yet again, many questions about censorship and translation. Normally, the local newspapers cover all the events in which the King participates and report his speeches in part or full. However, in this particular case no newspaper, not even the *Jordan Times*, mentioned anything about the unprecedented news the King revealed to the American newspaper. The King touched on sensitive topics that were part of everyday discussion in Jordanian political circles. The King described to the American newspaper his relationship with his heir (Prince Hamzah), his uncle (the former Crown Prince Hassan) and his stepmother (Queen Nur). The King also revealed that the reasons behind the dismissal of his Royal Court (the Hashemite Diwan) Chief – Abdul Karim el-Kabareti were that he had his own personal agenda.

The news about the names mentioned in the interview was deemed taboo in Jordan. They were referred to publicly for the first time in Jordan with much frankness. Those who read the King's statements spread the word, especially what he said about el-Kabareti, whom some people like to hate. Most of the people in Jordan who support conspiracy theories believe that el-Kabareti is America's man in the country and that he was one of three people who convinced the late King to change his successor days before his death.¹⁷

¹⁷ The other two are Abdul Hafit al-Ka'abneh, the ex-Chief-in-Command of the Jordanian Armed Forces (the Arab Legion) and Samih al-Batikhi, the Director of the Intelligence Department. Others include Queen Nur as part of the plot. Reference in the Jordanian media to the people mentioned here and their role in the change of the Crown Prince is strictly prohibited in Jordan.

In spite of the seriousness of the information revealed in the interview, no newspaper, except *al-Hadath*, dared to mention or translate any part of the interview. This fact raised many eyebrows. On the one hand, why was the King's important interview completely disregarded by the local newspapers? Why did the translation of the interview appear in a weekly newspaper? And why *al-Hadath* in particular? On the other hand, why did the King choose an American newspaper to address his people and to reveal serious decisions that affected the internal scene? Why did the King not do that through local newspapers, especially when he had expressed his wish, on assuming the throne, to see a more open relationship between the media and the regime? Why did he not opt for one of the Arabic daily newspapers, *al-Rai* for example, especially since the government owns most of its shares? Or if he meant his interview to appear in English, why did he not do that through the *Jordan Times*? Finally, why did the King opt for English in the first place, to divulge subjects that were being discussed by the general public? In other words, where the people in the street, in Abu Odeh's example, were not supposed to speak about the Palestinian–Jordanian issue publicly, the public in this case already knew much of what the King had said in the interview.

Undoubtedly, it was censorship that led to this paradoxical situation. The journalists were applying self-censorship probably because they thought that the issues addressed were taboo, especially the fact that the interview referred to the King's uncle, brother and stepmother. The above discussion shows the subtle ways in which censorship works. Sensitive issues for publication in Arabic are censored but are allowed to be published in English. Here it is self-censorship that is applied. Abu

Odeh and even the King censor themselves in Arabic but not in English. This is meant to withhold information not only from the majority of Jordanians, who speak only Arabic, but also from those many Jordanians whose knowledge of written English does not enable them to read the two items referred to above.

In terms of its knowledge of English language, Jordanian society can be divided into three categories – in addition to the three based on wealth. First, those who are fluent in English. Second, those whose knowledge of English is not enough to read items such as the ones referred to above. Third, those who do not know English at all. The intellectual elite in Jordan can and does enjoy greater freedom of information by virtue of its linguistic ability. It allows these people to know more about Jordan's sensitive issues that are unlikely to be available in Arabic. In other words, it gives them an opportunity to avoid censorship, keeps them aware of the socio-political changes in society, and, most importantly, gives some of them a chance to share in the decision-making.

The majority of the intellectual elite live in Amman, or to be more precise, in the western parts of Amman. The remainder live in the other main cities in the country. This division means that the western parts of Amman have become a centre of attraction for all those who have political aspirations, or want to enjoy the privilege of being considered among the elite. As far as censorship is concerned, those who live in this area have access to information published in English the content of which is supposed not to be disclosed to those speaking only Arabic. In other words, those who live in certain parts of one city in the Kingdom enjoy decensorship, whereas a

large number of the general public suffer from censorship. If this fact is added to the other fact that the same people in the western parts of Amman are known to be the wealthiest, or among the wealthiest, in Jordan, this gives the impression that Jordan is divided into two extreme social classes: the upper class which enjoys the freedom of information and the wealth, and the lower class which enjoys less, if any, freedom of information and certainly does not have wealth. The wealthiest enjoy access to the Internet and therefore escaping further Internet censorship. Obviously, with wealth and free, or even semi-free, access to information comes power. With power comes the pressure to protect the interests of these sections of society. The result could be that the political decisions are fashioned with an eye to those groups first and foremost, or at least, could lead to lenience in applying political censorship. Socially, this creates feelings of hatred between the *haves* and the *have-nots*, which could result in social and political unrest like that of 1989 in the southern parts of Jordan.

6.2 Translation Movement in Jordan¹⁸

The Arabs realised the importance of translation in the early stages of establishing their state. Translation flourished in the Abbasid era. Al-Ma'mun (786–833), the seventh Abbasid Caliph (reigned 813–833), established the Bayt al-Hikma (House of Wisdom) in 830 to encourage the translation of works on philosophy, science, logic and astronomy from the Indian, Greek and Persian languages into Arabic. Bayt al-Hikma “functioned as an academy, library and translation bureau and had a

¹⁸ Most of the information is from my own experience as a student of translation and a member of the JTA and from an interview with Dr Abdullah Shunnaq. The term *Movement* is used loosely here.

personnel of 65 translators, working from Greek, Syriac, Persian, Sanskrit and Aramaic” (Baker 2001: 320). Unfortunately, the prosperous era of translation did not last long. After the collapse of the Islamic State in 1492, the translation movement declined.

The efforts to revive the translation movement in the Arab world had to wait until the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The first steps were taken by individuals and then by publishers. The nineteenth century translations were mainly plays, novels and musical works from English, Italian and most importantly from French. Under the French invasion of Egypt in 1798, “translation activity focused on official document and legal decrees ... [,] a grammar of spoken Arabic ... and a treatise on smallpox” (ibid.: 322). Scientific translations in the nineteenth century were very rare except for a short period during Muhammad Ali’s reign in Egypt, which was done mainly for military purposes.

In the beginning of the twentieth century most Arab countries were occupied by France, Britain and Italy. Gradually however, efforts of individuals and organisation began to develop programmes of translation. In the 1950s the translation movement took another serious twist. Some Arab governments, in the pre-independence era, realised the importance of translation in the interaction with the rest of the world. Pan-Arab organisations were established, such as the Arabic Organisation for Education, Culture and Science in Tunisia. “The recommendations of this committee” as Baker (2001: 324) states:

Included developing common criteria for selecting texts for translation, reassessing the status of translators in the Arab world, establishing a coherent policy for

language learning and translator training, setting up regional and Arab unions to represent translators, and encouraging theoretical research in translation

In addition to the government organisations, there were scattered, unorganised and unplanned efforts in the translation field by individuals.

In Jordan, the situation was no different from that of the rest of the Arab world. It was not until 1993 that the translators managed to establish the Jordanian Translation Association (JTA) with the support of the Ministry of Culture and many enthusiastic scholars. Before that translations were unorganised efforts. Dr Shunnaq states in the interview that it was difficult for researchers to assess the quantity or the quality of translations produced over the years prior to the establishment of the JTA for two different reasons. First, there were no official records showing the real situation of translation in the country. The number of translators in Jordan is small and most of them are part-timers. What is even worse is that most of the translations do not appear in the records of the National Library. Second, most translators found it difficult to publish their translations because of financial difficulties.

Before the establishment of the JTA in 1993, universities were showing interest in translation. In 1982, for example, the Language Centre at the University of Jordan established a diploma course in English/Arabic and Arabic/English translation. In 1984/85, the Language Centre at Yarmouk University offered a two-year- diploma course in translation. Two years later, the diploma course was converted into a Masters degree. In 1992 the translation course became part of the English Department. When private universities were established in the 1990s, they offered

undergraduate courses in English language and translation or English literature and translation. The increasing interest in translation, as Dr Shunnaq emphasises in the interview, showed results and led to the establishment of JTA in 1993. JTA soon joined the Arab Translators' Federation (ATF). Most of the members of the JTA are teachers, lecturers and professors at the Jordanian universities or professional translators in government bodies.

Dr Shunnaq adds that although it has been recognised and patronised by the Ministry of Culture, JTA lacks financial support and formal recognition from different institutions in the country. Furthermore, the patronage of the Ministry of Culture has in itself been unhelpful for two reasons. First, it has meant that the works published by JTA are censored by the rules and regulations of the Department of Press and Publication. Secondly, not many literary bodies or intellectuals agree, to say the least, with the policy of the Ministry of Culture, so its sponsorship is not considered a privilege.

The translators and the translated works, however, follow the Press and Publications Law. Thus, as Dr Abu 'Ayen states in the interview, novels and translations, such as *A Feast for the Sea Herbs* by the Syrian writer Haider Haider or *The Satanic Verses* by the Anglo-Indian writer Salman Rushdie are banned on moral, political and religious grounds. The first is judged to be obscene, to inflame religious hostility and damage Jordan's relations with the neighbouring Arab countries. The latter inflames religious hostility and contains much obscene language. However, it is important to mention in this regard that the invisibility of translated publications does not mean

that they do not exist. Banned works can be found if the seller trusts the customer who wants them.

To sum up, the translation activity in Jordan depends on individual endeavour. Since the 1960s, translation was an individual effort. When the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University were established in 1962 and 1976 respectively, the interest increased in the translation activity. However, the translations depended in the beginning on solo efforts either for academic purposes, that is, to select material for the translation courses or for the various theatre troupes in the Department of Fine Arts or English and in the drama schools. Even works of this type were subject to censorship, be it self-censorship, political, religious, moral, or academic censorship.

I managed, with the help of a friend, to obtain an important unpublished *document*. The document is unlikely to be published. It contains the list of the books that were banned in Jordan from 1955 to 1987, most of which were banned Arabic books as well as translations of non-Arabic books. I tried to obtain other documents covering the years 1987–2000 or at least 1987–1990s, but that was impossible. The list consists of 1,248 banned books and contains five sections: the title of the book, the author, place of publication, date of publication, the name of the censor and the comments section outlining the reasons, if any, for banning the book.

A close examination of the list reveals the following facts. First, the translated books are few, which reflects the situation of translation in Jordan as a whole at the time and now. Second, nearly all the books were published outside Jordan; only two were

published in Amman. One book was published by al-Wahda Press, one book was a conference publication and two books were published by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) – no city was mentioned although they appear under city in the table below (my italics). Most of the banned books were published in the following cities:

City	Books	City	Books	City	Books	City	Books
Beirut	742	Haifa	5	China	2	India	1
Cairo	214	Tunisia	5	Belgium	2	Jeddah	1
Damascus	68	Sidon	4	Al-Farabi	2	Abu Dhabi	1
Baghdad	23	Aleppo	3	West Bank	2	Algeria	1
Jerusalem	21	----	3	Acre	2	Bethlehem	1
Kuwait	19	Libya	3	Ramallah	1	France	1
Moscow	7	Cyprus	3	London	1	<i>Al-Wahda</i>	1
Riyadh	6	<i>PLO</i>	2	Switzerland	1	<i>Conference</i>	1

Table (3.1)

Third, the list illustrates that there was a link between the reasons of censorship, date of publication and the subject of the book. Books about communism, Ba'athism, atheism, socialism or Nasserism were banned in the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, which matches the general mood of the government and some sectors of society at the time. From the mid 1960s onwards, as the *document* shows, books about the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) were banned. In the 1970s and 1980s the banned books were about black magic and sorcery. Books were banned at

all times if their subject was Zionism or the support of the establishment of the Israeli entity in Palestine, attacks on the monarchy, King Hussein, King Abdullah I, Sharif Hussein or the Hashemites, the Arabs, or if the books were judged to damage and misinterpret the message of Islam, the Holy Qur'an or other religions, namely Christianity.

The fourth fact that the list illustrates is the categories of censor. It is clear from the list that there was more than one censor. The censors are the Director-General of the DPP, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Religious Endowments (Awqaf Ministry) or the ordinary member of staff. It is apparent from the different categories of censor that there is a covert form of hierarchy decided by the seriousness and sensitivity of the censored books. Normally, the name of the Director-General of DPP does not appear on the list of banned books unless a certain book is referred to him. If the Director-General cannot decide, the work is referred to other censors. In instances that affect the security of the country, the books are referred to the Ministry of Defence and/or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their decision. Where religion is concerned, the books are referred to the Ministry of Endowments.

It is clear from the list that the reasons for censoring the books are not very clear. Sometimes it is a matter of speculation about the content of the book or the author. Book number 3 on the list: *'Aina Allah* by Maxim Gorky illustrates this. Judging from the title, the evident reason for banning the book should be atheism. However, the censor's reason is socialism. So is it because of the author – Maxim Gorky – that

the censor decided to ban the book? Or is it because some pages, chapters or the whole book was about socialism? For items: 452, 453, 1074 and 1,248, the censor lists the numbers of the pages that he believes to be the reason for censorship: pp. 180, 65 & 156, 76, 135 & 243 respectively. It is, however, not known whether the book as a whole was banned or whether it was allowed after removing the problematic pages.

Although the *document* sheds light on the areas of censorship in Jordan, it leaves many questions unanswered: does the DPP, for example, censor the book or the author of the book? If an author's book is banned for any reason, does that mean that all his or her books will be banned or just the book censored? The list does not give any hint of how the censor works. It does not give evidence of the procedures that are followed in censoring books. Does the employee-censor, for example, refer certain kinds of works to the Director-General? If yes, when? And why? Is the Director-General's decision final? Unfortunately, the *document* does not allow us to establish if the censor's cultural background, that is, beliefs, religion or principles, interferes in his work or influences his decisions.

Finally, it is noticeable that there was a link between what was censored and the government's policies during a given era. The banned books on the list were the result of the government's anti-Socialism, anti-Ba'athism and anti-Nasserism policies in the 1950s and 1960s. The document shows, yet again, how censorship followed the main policies of the time. As part of the government's anti-Nasserism, anti-communism and anti-Ba'athism policies, all publications that do not comply with the government's policies were banned.

7. The Media in Jordan

7.1 The Department of Press and Publication (DPP)¹⁹

The Department of Press and Publication (DPP) was established in the first Jordanian government in 1921 and it was the first government department of the media. It was then called the Department of Publication Censorship (DPC). Its main role, especially in the years before World War II, was to *prohibit* and *cancel* all anti-monarchy or anti-government political leaflets, particularly those that were issued from Germany and Italy. Newspapers and news bulletins broadcast from Berlin, which supported the Nazi regime or the ideas of the Palestinian leadership, (which chose Berlin as its refuge), were also banned. At the top of the DPC's blacklist were names like Hajj Amin al-Hussaini (1895–1974) (the Mufti²⁰ of Jerusalem and the Founder of the Palestinian National Movement) and the newscaster Yunis al-Bahri.

It is worth mentioning here that very many people believed that the rivalry between King Abdullah I and Hajj al-Hussaini stemmed from the ambition regarding Palestine.²¹ It was believed by many Palestinians and some Arabs that King Abdullah I “was determined to exploit the opportunity presented by the end of the British Mandate in Palestine to extend the boundaries of his Kingdom at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs” (Elpeleg 1993: 84). It was an ambition that Hajj al-Hussaini

¹⁹ Most of the information about the DPP is from the interviews with Abdullah el-‘Itum and Dr Musa al-Kilani.

²⁰ The Mufti (pl. muftis) is a Muslim legal expert who gives a nonbinding legal opinion (fatwa) on the sacred law (Shari’a).

²¹ For more details on the subject, see ‘Isa Muhsen’s (1995), *Filastin wa el-Mufti Mohammed Amin el-Husseini*; Philip Matter’s (1988), *The Mufti of Jerusalem: al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni, and the Palestinian National Movement*; Mary Wilson’s (1990), *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*; and Zavi Elpeleg’s (1993), *The Grand Mufti: Haj Amin al-Hussaini, Founder of the Palestinian National Movement*.

opposed very strongly. King Abdullah I was accused of playing a role in the partition of Palestine. He consequently was viewed as a “British client”, to use Wilson’s (1987) words. Even worse, King Abdullah “was accused in Palestine of having sold himself to the Zionists” (cited in Wilson 1987: 103).

Looking back at the whole issue of the rivalry between himself and King Abdullah I, Hajj al-Hussaini denied the *political* dispute (Hajj al-Hussaini referred to a *political* instead of *personal* dispute used by many historians), as cited in Muhsen (1995: 373–375). Hajj al-Hussaini insisted, “I was on good terms with the King [Abdullah I]. The only difference was on the principles and the best possible ways to find a solution to the Palestinian issue in particular and other Arab issues in general” (ibid. 373).²²

Nevertheless, by then, the situation was beyond rectifying. “The situation ... was very clear: on one side stood Abdullah [with his alleged ambition of annexing Palestine]; on the other, Haj Amin, who strove to prevent Abdullah from realising his ambition” (Elpeleg 1993: 88). The rivalry between the two men resulted in strict application of political censorship in Jordan on newspapers and news programmes that supported al-Hussain’s ideas. Prohibiting and censoring all anti-monarchy or anti-government political leaflets, especially the ideas of the Palestinian leadership, became the main role of the DPC.

Censorship in the above cases was initiated by the British to protect their position in the area, particularly to protect their rule over Palestine (1917–1948). The DPC and

²² My translation.

the Arab Legion, headed by Glubb Pasha, worked together very closely. The firm link between the Arab Legion and the DPC continued until the establishment of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1946. From that year on, the title of the Head of the DPC was changed from censor to Director-General of the Publication Department. The significance of this post can be known from the important names that held it. Most of the Director-Generals of the DPC became Prime Ministers, for example Said Juma'h, Abdul Min'im al-Rifai and Wasfi al-Tall.

The year 1969 marked another important shift in the work of the DPC. The first Ministry of Information in the history of Jordan was established. The role played by this Ministry did not differ from that of the DPC except that it expanded to include censorship of the radio. With the proliferation of the new media, such as cinema, television and video films, a new section was established within the DPC, which included the censorship of these media. The main task of this new section was to make sure that Arabic and foreign films did not contain pornographic scenes, foul language, anti-government political messages or anti-religious themes. Even subtitles in translated films were strictly censored by using two methods: dubbing and blocking (or deleting if possible) the translated subtitles.

Since it was first established, the DPC's main job did not change. It consisted of censoring any publications and other media that provoked religious feeling, poured scorn on the King and the Royal Family, harmed the national economy and social unity, or led to moral corruption. The work of the DPC, whose name was changed to the Department of Press and Publication (DPP), was always influenced by the current

political conditions in the country. Books published in Arab capitals, in particular Cairo, Beirut and Damascus, were closely scrutinised and in some cases strictly banned. This policy was part of the psychological war between Jordan and countries such as Egypt in the 1950s, Syria in the 1960s, Iraq in the 1970s and Iran in the 1980s. Foreign books, magazines and newspapers, or their translations, which were published outside the Arab world, were examined differently regarding their influence on the reader. Whereas some of the less popular foreign newspapers were allowed to enter Jordan, although they contained news deemed taboo by Arabic newspapers, some of the foreign or translated books were banned. However, in some cases, the ban was only on the translation of a particular book. It did not necessarily include the original version of the book (the source language text), which could be available in the bookshops. Examples were Patrick Seal's books on Syria, and Paul Findely's book (1991): *They Dared To Speak Out: People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby* (the title of the Arabic translation was: *Man Yajru' ala al-Kalam/who dares to speak*). Other examples were books about Jordan and the Hashemites in 1948, which were written by Jordanians and Palestinians. The DPP banned these books on the basis that they expressed negative personal perspectives on the Hashemites, such as Anis Saygh's (1966, Beirut) *al-Hashimyun wa Qadiyat Filastin* (The Hashemites and the Palestinian Problem), Saleh Sa'ib al-Juburi's (1970, Beirut) *Mihnat Filastin wa Asraruha al-Siasiya wal-'Askariya* (The Palestinian Disaster and its Political and Military Secrets), and Muhammad Faisal 'Abd al-Munim's (1968, Cairo) *Asrar 1948 (The Secrets of 1948)*.²³ Any challenge in any form of publication or any type of medium, was considered an attack on the monarchy. No books, films

²³ From a forthcoming article by Eugene Rogan. It was first delivered in the Second International Conference on the Social History of Jordan, Amman, 3–5 July 2000.

or periodicals that discuss the Hashemites in Jordan was/is allowed, in spite of the reinstatement of democracy. For example, the film *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962, Dir. David Lean) will remain banned in Jordan no matter how relaxed the rules of censorship, precisely because it throws doubts on the role of the Hashemites in the Arab Revolt of 1916. This kind of censorship is unlikely to be changed over the coming years.

Dr al-Kilani states in the interview that the DPP was very strict in dealing with publications that were pro-communism. Numerous books published by the Modern Printing Press in Moscow were banned in Jordan. The penalty for having or receiving books printed in this publishing company was six months imprisonment under the provision of “Encouraging communist Propaganda”. The rules were strict to the extent that the public were reluctant to refer to certain words normally used by or associated with communism, such as *rafiq* (comrade) *ta’awun* (collaborating), *manshur* (manifesto), and *hizb* (party). However, all these strict rules were eased in the 1980s when Jordan signed a diplomatic protocol with Moscow. Books that were banned in the era before the protocol as well as new books published in Moscow became available not only in bookshops but also at exhibitions. This shows that the big changes in political stances, and the shift of alliances between Moscow, Washington, China, Syria and Iraq affected the strictness and rigidity of censors.²⁴

The methods that the DPP adopted in banning books changed over the years. They ranged from overt censorship to covert censorship. Overt censorship meant banning

²⁴ Interview with Dr Musa al-Kilani.

the publications and films altogether, cutting certain pages from a book or a magazine, and dubbing or cutting scenes from films. Covert censorship meant allowing such publications and films under controlled policies. One example was to offer the controversial books and/or their translations, magazines or video films at high prices, because then, not everyone could afford to buy them. Another example was to put controversial books and/or their translations, magazines or video films on sale exclusively in certain remote bookshops and video shops. A third example was to put the *controversial* publications in special sections in libraries called "the dark rooms" or, to use Suleiman's (forthcoming: 15) words, "closed shelves or behind the librarian's desk". Access to these books is limited. Books and translations based on British and Israeli archives fall into this category as well. Examples of this are: Suleiman Bashir's (1980, Jerusalem) *Judhur al-Wisaya al-Urduniya (The Roots of the Jordanian Trusteeship)*, Avi Shlaim's (1988, Oxford) *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine*, Uri Bar-Joseph's (1987, London) *The Best of Enemies: Israel and Transjordan in the War of 1948*, and Mary Wilson's (1987, Cambridge) *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*.²⁵

The developments on the Jordanian political scene, particularly the events in southern Jordan in 1988, forced changes in the operation of the DPP. Democracy was reinstated in the country and the elected Parliament called for a new press and publication law. A new press law was passed in 1993, which preserved some of the provisions of the pre-1989 era, like the prohibition of offensive references to the

²⁵ Eugene Rogan, a forthcoming article, endnote no. 7. The article was first delivered in the Second International Conference on the Social History of Jordan, Amman, 3–5 July 2000.

King and members of the Royal Family, insulting the presidents of Arab countries, harming the social fabric or provoking religious feeling. The peace agreement with Israel in 1994 imposed other changes on the work of the DPP and resulted in more amendments to the press law, which were approved by the government in 1997. The new (amended) press law of 1997 prohibited insulting the presidents of *friendly* countries whereas the law of 1993 had prohibited insulting the presidents of Arab and Muslim countries. It goes without saying that the reason behind adding the word “friendly” was to stop any future criticism of the Israelis. In addition, according to the 1997 press law, newspaper owners had to increase the capital of their newspapers 20 times the original capital (JD 300,000 instead of JD 15,000) as will be discussed later – under the Press section – which was aimed at making life difficult for some of the owners of opposition weekly newspapers. The new terms imposed indirect censorship (covert censorship) on journalists. The chief editor was to be held responsible by law for all prohibited material published in his newspaper. He had to censor himself in the first place by making sure that his work did not violate the new terms, which would result in his detention, the closing down of the newspaper and the imposition of a fine. The new press law established the government as the censor by giving it the right to detain the chief editor and to close down any newspaper without the court’s decision. Even if the court decided to release the chief editor, the government would not pay any compensation for the period of closure.

Being aware of the continuing developments in the mass media and the criticism of the 1997 press law, as Dr al-Kilani mentions in the interview, King Hussein called a meeting with the country’s press at the Royal Court (the Hashemite Diwan). In his

meeting with nearly eighty journalists, King Hussein set out his orders to abolish the censorship of all newspapers, especially those that came into the country from the outside. The King's orders were not put into operation by the government. Censorship of the press remained as it was before the meeting. The King's deteriorating health, which no newspaper nor the JTV and the radio dared to mention, and the trust that he always had in whoever was Prime Minister delayed the eradication of the censorship of journalism and publications. King Abdullah II was very aware of the problems created by the amendments to the Press and Publication Law. Thus, in April 1999, through the Minister of Information, it was announced that the press and publications were no longer subject to censorship.

From the above discussion one can draw the following conclusions. It is obvious that the role of the DPP was influenced by changes in the political circumstances of the region. Censorship has always been effective in keeping the Jordanian population receptive to government policies. Censorship claimed other roles over time, especially when new forms of mass media were introduced into Jordan, such as the radio, which gave the general public the opportunity to listen to different opinions – different from those of the government. Nevertheless, the DPP would react very quickly to restrain the emergence of different opinions or the formation of opposition views. One example was the pro-Nasser era, which had a dramatic impact on most Arabs, particularly the Palestinians. The role of radio is echoed nowadays by the satellite channels. General Saleh states in the interview that satellite channels seem to have created the same immediate transformation in the Arab world as that of the cassette recordings when el-Khumaini sent his sermons from his Deux-Eglises Villa

in France to his followers in Iran. Most Arab governments nowadays find it impossible to control the huge developments in the mass media. The mushrooming of the Internet and satellite channels has led to a change in the public's reception of news. One of the most important of these satellite channels is al-Jazeera (Qatar). This particular channel has marked the end of traditional censorship. It is attracting audiences because it has widened the margins of freedom and has removed what were regarded as political taboos by most governments in the Arab world.

It is noticeable that DPP censorship of the media has eased over the years except on publications or films that violate the cultural and religious norms, as the following example illustrates. One of the films that the censors in Jordan banned in 1999 was the Egyptian film *Amn Dawla* (Security of the State). It was banned on religious grounds because it gave an insulting picture of Muslim sheikhs and thinkers: they were presented as womanisers, drug addicts, and terrorists. The film was thought to insult the Muslim Brotherhood Party and the Islamic movement in Egypt. The film also contains different scenes that were judged to harm and contradict the social values of Jordanian society. I was invited to participate in one of the DPP film examinations by Abdullah el-'Itum, the Director-General of the DPP. The DPP had decided in one of its meetings to ban *Amn Dawla* (Security of the State). When the film distributor appealed against its decision, the Ministry of Information formed another committee and called it for a meeting. The committee was chaired by MP Mahmoud Kharabsheh and included members of the DPP, Monsignor Abdul Ra'uf al-Najjar (representing the Christian point of view), Dr Ibrahim Zaid al-Kilani (a former Minister of Religious Endowments (representing the Muslim view) and Dr

Nabil al-Sharif, Editor-in-Chief of *Ad-Dustour* daily newspaper. (The Director-General does not have the right to voice his opinion at this stage). He and his department had already given their view, which was not accepted by the distributor. At the end of the meeting, the decision was taken by a majority of 9 to 6 to ban the film in Jordan. When I asked whether there would be another appeal to lift the ban, the relieved Director-General explained that any argument against religious decisions was a waste of time. He added that there was always room to disagree with, challenge or appeal against censorial decisions taken on political or moral grounds where views varied. With religion, however, the decision had to be accepted. The risks of opposing religion were very high; no one was ready to take them.²⁶

To conclude: modern technology is widening the vision of the new generation and offering new methods of avoiding the censors' firm control on information and knowledge. However, will modern technology mark the end of the role of the DPPs in Jordan or the Arab world? Is there any sense in the call by a considerable number of intellectuals and politicians to close down the Ministries of Information and their DDP?²⁷ Although Jordan has reinstated democracy, it is still lagging way behind the real democracies in the world. Part of the reason for this may be the political and cultural norms of Jordanian society, which is part of a bigger Arab and Muslim

²⁶ Interview with Abdullah el-'Itum after the committee meeting. The Jordanian DPP's decision to ban the film was mentioned in *al-Quds* daily newspaper (London) on 7 July 1999.

²⁷ Ibrahim 'Izz Addin, the former Minister of Information, Marwan Mu'asher, the Jordanian Ambassador to US and a former Minister of Information promised to close down the Ministry of Information following calls to do so from journalists who believed it to be outdated.

society. Another part could be the personnel who interpreted and implemented King Hussein's policies.

Despite the vital role of satellite channel and the Internet in the public's lives, censorship is not completely eased. It will remain unlikely to relax the control on the media while four different laws are functioning at the same time in a small country like Jordan: tribal law, jurisprudence, civil law and religious law.

7.2 JTV & Radio Jordan

In Jordan, the mass media are a vital tool in the hands of the government. The government controls the Jordanian Corporation of Radio and Television, the official Jordanian Agency *Petra* has big shares in the main newspapers. Jordan has no cinema industry. However, cinema-going is a very popular pastime. Arabic films are usually imported from Egypt, Syria and Iraq. Non-Arabic films are imported from the West (America, Britain, France, Turkey and Italy), and India. Arabic and non-Arabic films – scenes and translated subtitles – are subject to strict censorship of censors in the DPP or the Censorship Department in JTV. The government controls 65 per cent of *al-Rai* newspaper and the English-language newspaper, the *Jordan Times*; 39 per cent of *ad-Dustour* newspaper, and it used to control 75 per cent of *Sawt al-Sha'b* newspaper, before *al-Sha'b* was closed down in 1995. The government media are utilised for promoting, supporting and justifying the government's achievements, decisions and actions. "The journalistic culture here is part of the dominating culture in the country" (Andoni 1991: 25). The media system in Jordan is displayed by the strict control of the government over the media through

the Ministry of Information, which directly supervises the printed media and publications through the Department of Press and Publication (DPP). The government, as Dr el-Karaki states in the interview, appoints the editors-in-chief of most of the daily newspapers and has a considerable number of seats on the boards of directors of the two main daily newspapers: *al-Rai* and *ad-Dustour*. The government also exercises its control over the media through the Royal Court (the Hashemite Diwan) by conveying its preferences to the editors-in-chief or to the Director-General of JTV & Jordanian Radio.

JTV and Radio Jordan are headed by a General-Director. Censorship is applied by the Ministry of Information and the Department of Censorship in JTV. The government appoints the General-Director of the corporation and it approves the appointment of the manager of JTV and the Director of the Jordanian Radio. Contrary to the free supervisory system of American television or the paternal supervisory system of British television, Jordanian television is classified as an authoritarian instructive supervisory System.²⁸ Thus, “the government decides the contents of the programmes and speaks on behalf of the viewers” (Masannat 1996: 240), as the following examples will show.

²⁸ According to Sydney W. Head, an American researcher, these three supervisory systems are applied to the televisions of the world. The American example is the kind of system that trusts the market forces and the principles of supply and demand but it operates under checks and balances. On the other hand, the British television example seeks to strike a balance between supply and demand in the market on one hand, and the needs of viewers on the other. For more details see Masannat in el-Hourani's *The Democratic Process in Jordan*, 1996.

The first example, which illustrates the government's firm control over JTV, is the way in which JTV dealt with the peace process. The second example is the way in which JTV dealt with the issue of democracy. The former illustrates the changes in censorship over time. Before the peace treaty in 1994, JTV censorship was evident in any reference to Israel or the Israelis. News about meetings between Israel and Jordanian officials was strictly censored. Israel was described as either the *Israeli-Zionist entity* or the *enemy state*. After the peace treaty, JTV reversed its policy towards Israel, so expressions like Zionist entity or enemy state disappeared completely from the news bulletins and other programmes and "regular meetings with visiting Jewish delegations were shown on prime time television" (Lalor 1999: 358). However, as Dr Tarawneh states in the interview, other issues concerning Israel continued to be censored on JTV, such as Israeli films, songs and other programmes. He added, "no Israeli film was ever broadcast on JTV and is unlikely to be broadcast either in the near future. Even foreign films (American, British or French) that contain Israeli themes or discuss Israeli matters are still banned. The actors who take part in these films are blacklisted. One example is *Schindler's List* (1993, Dir. Steven Spielberg)." News against the monarchy's political decision or in peace treaty is likely to remain banned on JTV. One example of this is, as Dr al-Kilani mentions in the interview, is "the burning of King Hussein and of Prince Hassan's pictures during demonstrations in Palestine against the Jordanian peace treaty. These pictures were never shown or mentioned on JTV".

The second example which illustrates the government's firm control over JTV is its suppression of anti-government views, such as the overuse on JTV of the word

democracy. JTV broadcasts programmes about democracy, which promote official concepts. This was clear from “the emphasis ... placed on certain promotional slogans, such as: “Jordan is a unique democratic model in the region”, “Jordan is an oasis of democracy”, “democracy means the freedom of expression”, [and] “Transmitting the views of the parliament deputies and senators to the viewers is a democratic manifestation” (Masannat 1996: 243). The last slogan in particular was the source of accusation from the opposition as well as most of the viewers. The opposition sees the implementation of that slogan as proof of JTV’s promotion of the MPs’ speeches that fall in with the official view, and the invisibility of the speeches that gainsay it.

Censorship of Arabic and foreign films and TV serials is applied by the Department of Censorship in JTV. From this perspective, the work of the Department of censorship in JTV looks similar to that of the DPP. Despite the co-operation between both departments, the Department of Censorship in JTV concentrates more on Arabic or foreign films and TV serials that will be shown on JTV only. It does not include cinema films or the press. The work of the DPP is more comprehensive; for it covers all forms of media in Jordan. However, both departments are part of the Ministry of Media and Information.

The Department of Censorship in JTV applies the same rules of censorship as those which are usually applied by the DPP to cinema films and songs. Scenes that contain profanity in Arabic or foreign films, televised plays and video films; songs or scenes that contain kisses, miniskirts, sleeveless clothes, nudity, transparent clothes, belly

dancing, love scenes, too much violence, drug-taking and swearing are censored. Most of the Egyptian movies of the 1970s are judged to fall into these categories and are censored, especially on the main TV channel (the Arabic channel) in Jordan. Films that contain offensive scenes are censored by means of dubbing or montage. Sometimes the film as a whole is banned if it contains pornography or when the many cut scenes distort the theme of the film or if the censor's work provokes annoyance among the audience.²⁹ Hisham Yanis – the renowned Jordanian actor, director and playwright – in my interview with him states, “the same rules apply to theatre. One example in this regard could be the ban on one of the plays in which two Jordanian actors – Ghanam Ghanam and Suher Fahd – kissed.”

Songs are subject to religious censorship too. Muslims have two different views on singing. Some forbid singing. This view is wide spread among some people in the Gulf States, especially Saudi Arabia, although they do not forbid songs that encourage patriotisms or morality. Others hold more moderate views about singing.

Dr Sami Suboh – the Vice-Mufti in the Jordanian Armed Forces (Arab Legion) – states in the interview that:

The reasons for prohibiting singing fall into three categories: first, lyrics may contain blasphemy, or explicit or implicit obscenity. Second, the inclusion of women in music, which brings men and women together in public places. Third, musical instruments are prohibited for they are regarded as the instruments of Satan; in other words, singing distracts people from practising their religion, which meets the goal of Satan of diverting people from the right path.

²⁹ Most of this information is from my own experience while working in JTV.

The first group support their point of view by citing many verses from the Holy Qur'an and many Hadiths. They regularly refer to Sura Luqman (chapter 31), verse 6:

And of mankind is he who purchases idle talk (i.e. music, singing) to mislead (Men) from the Path of Allah without knowledge, and take it (the Path of Allah, or the Verses of the Qur'an) by way of mockery. For such there will be a humiliating torment (in the Hell fire).

(Al-Hilali and Khan 1998: 587)

The often-quoted Hadith is one in *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith Number 5590: Abu Amir or Abu Malik al-Ash'ari narrated that he heard the Prophet saying:

From among my followers there will be some people who will consider illegal sexual intercourse, the wearing of silk, the drinking of alcoholic drinks, and the use of *musical instruments* as lawful ... Allah will destroy them during the night...and He will transform the rest of them to monkeys and pigs; and they will remain so till the Day of Resurrection.

The second group do not regard singing as a sin so long as their religious obligations are fulfilled and the songs or singers do not violate the principles of Islam. They support their view by Hadith number 527 mentioned in the *Summarised Sahih al-Bukhari*. The Hadith is about the display of spears and shields on 'Eid festival day, which clearly shows that the Prophet himself did not mind singing in his house at Eid:

'Aisha [the Prophet's wife] narrated: Allah's Messenger came to my house while two girls were singing the songs of Bu'ath (a story about the war before Islam between the two tribes of the Ansar, the Khazraj and the 'Aws). The Prophet lay down and turned his face to the other side. Then Abu Bakr came and spoke to me harshly saying, "Musical instruments of Satan near the Prophet?" Allah's Messenger turned his face towards him and said, "Leave them." When Abu Baker became inattentive, I signalled to those girls to go out and they left".

(Khan 1998: 277)

Nevertheless, most people do not accept any infringement of the basic values of religion. When any of the religious norms are breached, censorship is demanded. An example of a song which was subject to censorship is the case of the Lebanese singer Marcel Khalifeh. He chose the poem “Ya Abati Ana Yusuf” (Oh my Father, I am Yusuf) by the Palestinian poet, Mahmoud Darwish, to be included in one of his albums: the *offending* part of the song is the last two lines of the poem (my translation):

Did I wrong anyone when I said that I
Saw eleven stars, and the sun and the moon,
Saw them kneeling before me?

Darwish cites verse 4 in Sura *Yusuf* (chapter 12):

(Remember [Muhammad]) when Yusuf (Joseph) said to his father: ‘Oh my father! Verily I saw (in a dream) eleven stars and the sun and the moon – I saw them prostrating themselves to me’.

(Al-Hilali and Khan 1998: 332–333)

It is important to mention in this regard that religion does not prohibit poets or people of letters from citing from the Holy Qur’an or the Sunna. Thus, the poem was not banned. The situation changed dramatically, however, when the Lebanese singer decided to sing the poem and insisted on keeping the last two lines. The singer received advice from many Muslim *‘ulama* not to include the lines in question because that would provoke Muslim feeling.³⁰ Nevertheless, the singer insisted on

³⁰ Sheikh Mohammad Ali al-Juzu, a Lebanese sheikh, said “ I personally advised the singer Khalifeh not to sing any verse from the Holy Qur’an because it is a sacred religious book and no Muslim will accept that but he did not listen. However, no Muslim committee took the case to the court”. Al-Juzu speaking to al-Jazeera Satellite Channel, 9 August 2000.

singing the poem as a whole and did so causing an uproar in the Arab world which resulted in the song being classified as offensive. It was banned in most Arab countries, except Syria and Lebanon. The belief of some of Khalifeh's critics that he was a communist added fuel to the fire and he was accused of blasphemy. However, it is to be emphasised that applications of religious censorship to songs vary from one Arab country to another. As mentioned above, Syria did not ban Khalifeh's song. In Jordan the authorities were *reluctant* to broadcast the song on JTV or Radio Jordan. The song, however, was available secretly in some of the music shops in Amman.

The same may be said about the poem "Nahr al-Ahzan" (The River of Sadness) by the Syrian poet Nizar Qabbani. The famous Bahraini musician Khalid al-Sheikh sang the poem. In one of the lines Qabbani describes his beloved as being like Allah's Shadow in his eyes (my translation):

"You are in my eyes (to me) like the Shadow of Allah (you are so great)."

Although this particular song earned al-Sheikh fame in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria and became one of his classics, the album was banned in Saudi Arabia for two reasons. First, the poet himself – Qabbani – was blacklisted in Saudi Arabia because of his poem: "Man Qatala al-Imam?" (Who Killed the Imam?) Second, some of the 'ulama' considered the song/poem offensive because of the phrase, *the shadow of Allah*. Many Muslim 'ulama' believed that the poet referred to Allah as an animate or inanimate object that has shadow which contradicts verse 11, Sura al-Shura (chapter: 42) in the Holy Qur'an (my italics):

“The Creator of the heavens and the earth, He has made for you mates from yourselves, and for the cattle (also) mates. By this means He creates you (in the wombs). *There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.*

(Al-Hilali and Khan 1998: 691)

However, the producers later launched the album in Saudi Arabia without *the song*.

Foreign songs are supposed to undergo the same scrutiny. Nevertheless, I have noticed in Jordan that the censors authorise many foreign songs without any serious examination, which poses some questions. If Arabic songs are censored on the basis of the lyrics in a poem, why is it that the same censors allow some foreign albums that contain flagrant violations of religion and traditions? One example could be the album, *The Hits*, by the American country singer Garth Brooks. By the censorial standards applied to the Arabic songs above, Brooks' album should be censored. Most of the songs in the album not only disregard Islamic principles, but also defy the Arabic traditions. Songs such as: “*That Summer*”, “*Friends in Low Places*” or “*Unanswered Prayers*” are expected, according to the censorial decisions in Jordan, to be banned because they contain insulting references to Allah Almighty and may be judged to encourage adultery, indecency and the drinking of Alcohol. The first song, for example, describes a sexual relationship between a teenager and “a lonely widow woman” in the countryside. The second talks about friends in brothels, whereas the third contain improper references, from an Islamic standpoint, to God. By the religious and social norms, the songs provoke religious feelings and introduce Western customs unlikely to be acceptable in the Arab world.

The question remains, why were the censors *lenient* with Brooks' album? Could the reasons behind the loose censorship be that the album targeted the foreign expatriates

in Jordan? Or was it that the censors did not know English very well and so they did not fully understand the meaning of the songs? Or was it because they *were* in English that the songs were not censored? In other words, since the majority of Jordanians speak only Arabic, it is unlikely that they will buy the album, or if they do, they will not be able to understand the songs. Those who will buy the album are expected to be Western-educated or Western-oriented customers who might not consider the songs in the album offensive. As it was in Abu Odeh's book and King Abdullah I's interview in *The New York Times*, those who are fluent in English do have more privileges compared with those whose knowledge of English does not enable them to read the King's interview and Abu Odeh's book, or to understand English lyrics. King Abdullah I's interview in *The New York Times*, Abu Odeh's book and Brooks' album show on the one hand the subtle ways in which censorship works. On the other hand it shows that certain groups in Jordanian society do enjoy greater freedom of information.

The censors in the Department of Censorship in JTV pay more attention to foreign films, which are broadcast on Channel 2 JTV (the foreign channel). They closely watch most of the foreign films and apply censorship where necessary by either cutting whole scenes or banning the film altogether. Even the translated subtitles, English or Arabic, are censored if they include swearing. However, it has to be said here that on Channel 2, rules of censorship are much more relaxed than those applied on the main (Arabic) Channel. One reason is that Channel 2 is aimed at the foreign sector of Jordanian society and the liberal Western oriented audience among

Jordanians. None the less, “no matter how daring and liberal the censors are”, as Abdullah el-‘Itum – the Director-General of DPP – states in the interview:

There are norms – religious norms in the first place – that censors cannot violate, the boundaries that they cannot cross. These norms make the censors’ scissors razor-sharp on films. All types of film, be they documentaries, stories, plays or even cartoons are subject to the censors’ detailed scrutiny. Sometimes the censors follow every single word.

El-‘Itum adds that examples of foreign films which were censored on religious grounds were *The Last Tango in Paris* (1973, Dir. Bernardo Bertolucci) and *Basic Instinct* (1993, Dir. Paul Verhoeven) on account of their pornographic content. Some episodes of the children’s cartoon film *Tom and Jerry* (Disney production) were censored because they presented the hereafter in a funny way: the angels were cats, and a coarse voice represented God (Allah Almighty), who was presented as unmerciful. The censors are more careful in examining Arabic films than non-Arabic films because of the keenness and manoeuvring of Arab directors and writers to overcome censorship. Directors usually use symbolism to avoid censorship. The frequently used technique, in some Arabic movies, is to zoom the camera on the actors and actresses’ eyes and on boiling water in a tea/coffee pot to refer to love scenes or wedding nights for example. To show the end of the affair or the end of the wedding night, the camera would show the tea or coffee pouring out of the tea/coffee pot.

7.3 The Press

King Abdullah I, who was a poet and a man of letters, established the first Jordanian newspaper, *al-Haq* in 1920. He used to write in the newspaper himself and it was distributed to the leading figures of the Great Arab Revolt. Since then, the Jordanian

press had undergone three phases of evolution. The first phase lasted from the creation of the Kingdom until 1952. Many newspapers were published and most of the topics were about Pan-Arab nationalism and anti-colonialism. The press of the first phase had meagre resources and its laws were adopted either from the Ottoman era or from the British Mandate. The Ottoman Press Law, which was amended in 1928 and 1933, controlled the Jordanian press. In 1945, major changes to the Press Law were made, which gave the Interior Minister the right to ban any newspaper that violated it.³¹

The second phase of the press covered the period from 1954 to 1970. The 1950s were prosperous times for the press. Daily newspapers appeared in both Banks of the River Jordan. The Jordanian Press Association was established to add to the professionalism and maturity of journalism. In 1953, the first publication law was passed. "National documents available indicated that ... some 38 newspapers, including 7 daily newspapers, and 39 magazines were published. The daily newspapers were *al-Urdun*, *Filastin*, *Difa'*, *Jazeera*, *Jihad*, *Nisr* and *Nahda*" (al-Qudah 1996: 233). Political parties in the 1950s had their own newspapers. A new press law was introduced in 1967, the old press law was re-enforced and the Jordanian State Agency (Petra) was established in 1969.³²

³¹ Ibrahim Ezz Addin, "Press Freedom in Jordan" in *Press and Media Freedom in Jordan*. Russell E. Lucas (ed), 1998.

³² The government employs 170 staff, among whom are 100 journalists. The Agency generates nearly 200 stories daily.

The third phase of the press began in the 1970s. This era was marked by the transformation of journalism from a profession into an industry. Newspapers were widely circulated and were committed to the issues of the nation. The main problem for journalists was the Publication Law of 1973, which was similar to the rejected Publication Law of 1968. The main objection of the journalists was to “the severe restrictions on the freedom of the press, curtailing its ability to get genuinely involved in national issues and the problems of its own society. Freedom of expression was also severely restricted by this law” (Qudah 1996: 233).

The press in Jordan benefited from the liberal atmosphere that the country enjoyed after the 1989 election. This was palpable in the new forms of press introduced after 1989 and in the aftermath of the Gulf War 1991. Two main types of press arrived on the journalistic scene: the press associated with political parties and the tabloid press, or Yellow journalism as it is called in Jordan. Towards the end of 1992, the party press was officially licensed. Examples of this are *al-Watan* (Progress and Justice Party), *Nida' al-Watan* (Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party), *al-'Asr al-Jadid* (The Democratic Arab Islamic Movement Party Du'a), *al-Ba'ith* (Jordanian Arab People's Party), *al-Jamahir* (Jordanian Communist Party) and *al-Mustaqbal* (Future Party). The main purpose of these newspapers was to advance the parties' goals and agendas. By the beginning of 1995 most of the parties had stopped publishing their newspapers, mainly because of lack of finance.

The most famous examples of the second type of press, the tabloid press, are probably *Shihan* and *al-Bilad*. The main topics of these tabloids are stories about sex,

scandal and violence. The community did not easily accept this kind of press. According to Dr Abu 'Ayen, one of the interviewees, the exaggeration in the news, the fake stories and the sex scandals, though popular among certain sectors of society, made some parents refuse to allow the newspapers into the home.

The years 1998 and the 1999 saw the introduction of another type of journalism. This was the privately owned press. The Foundation of al-Arab al-Yawm (a private foundation) was the pioneer in this field. The Foundation issues an Arabic daily newspaper, *al-Arab al-Yawm*, and an English daily newspaper, *al-Arab Daily*.

However, despite the democratic atmosphere the Department of Press and Publication (DPP) remains in control of the press in Jordan. The Director-General of the DPP is appointed by the government and works as a watchdog not only over what is written in the press but also over the editors, publishers, writers and journalists.

To sum up, Jordan has made remarkable achievements in democracy which, as King Hussein put it, is an "irreversible option". Among these achievements has been the recognition of political parties and their inclusion in Parliament, the drafting of the National Charter, commitment to pluralism and Human Rights, and the relative freedom of the press. The first few years of reinstating democracy in 1989 held great promise for the people, especially journalists, who were carried away by its great expectations, and rightly so after decades of martial law. These great expectations

were encouraged by enthusiastic speeches by some Jordanian officials such as Khalid al-Karaki, the Minister of Information of the time, who told *al-Rai* in 1991.³³

The press has total freedom; this is an undisputed issue because commitment to the freedom of the press, and providing it with a democratic atmosphere to express the causes of the homeland and the nation, stem from our commitment to the constitutional liberties and the government's desire to maintain this liberty so that the press may shoulder the responsibility of this stage – a stage that carries deep democratic changes in terms of the basic concepts of justice, tolerance, dialogue, acceptance of the other's view, and consolidation of the authority of the law.

However, despite the steady progress that Jordan achieved in the first years of reinstating democracy in the country, the picture started to look bleak from mid-1993 onwards, at least as far as the press is concerned. In fact, many political factors, both internal and external, had affected democratisation. Consequently, freedom of the press was reduced.

From mid-1993, democratisation took a different route. The major setback was manifested in various actions taken by the government. First, the “One person, one vote” electoral system, which was introduced by the government without the approval of Parliament. Second, the government's decision to restrict the freedom of expression, and its violations of Human Rights.³⁴ Sharif Zeid's government suspended, for two years, the application of section (19d) of the Press Law of 1993 that made it illegal for the government to own more than 30 per cent of publication shares – the clause was dropped altogether by the government in 1997.

³³ *Al-Rai*, 5 August 1991 *al-Rai* and *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, 5 August 1991.

³⁴ Tahir al-Masri, “Waq' wa Afaq Tatwwur al-'Amaliya al- Dimuqratiya fi al-Urdun”, forthcoming.

The year 1995 witnessed the worst incident under the government of 1995 when the Jordanian police ruthlessly violated Human Rights and the freedom of expression. Killing Mohammed Khalifeh, the outspoken critic of the Jordanian regime, and injuring his brother, “sent a chill through a population not used to seeing dissidents dying in a blaze of gunfire”, reported Jack Redden, the Reuters journalist.³⁵ The incident was never acknowledged officially, nor was it published in the newspapers, nor even mentioned anywhere in the media. Even the *Jordan Times*, with its privileged position, did not publish it. It was a sensitive story in which the police were involved. Had the *Jordan Times* published it without an official statement, its editors would have faced imprisonment, as General Saleh states.³⁶ Redden’s story appeared a month after the incident took place. After heated discussion in Parliament, the government’s reaction was that the police action was in self-defence. The Islamists’ Parliamentary Deputy, Bassam el-‘Imush summed up the depressing situation by saying that Mohammed Khalifeh’s problem was that he was a man of principle. He wanted to speak his mind and say what was right and what was wrong, regardless of who was involved.³⁷ Khalifeh’s incident illustrated, contrary to what Dr al-Karaki said earlier about the freedom of the press in Jordan, the government’s intolerance of “dialogue and accept[ing] the other’s view”.

In 1997, two years after the Khalifeh incident, the government passed a new press law, which provoked unprecedented outrage from the journalists because it jeopardised the freedom of expression and information. The Press Law of 1993

³⁵ Jack Redden, “Security gets tighter in King Hussein’s Jordan”, Reuters dispatch, 2 July 1995.

³⁶ Interview with General Qasim Saleh.

³⁷ Sa’ida Kilani, “House discusses Khalifeh case and law on telecommunications”, *Jordan Times*, 18 August 1995.

included many controversial articles such as numbers 14, 20 and 40. The first held chief editors “responsible for what is published ... The owner of the publication and the writer of the published article also share [legal] responsibility”. Article 29 denied a licence to any newspaper without sufficient financial support (a minimum capital of JD 50,000) and the Minister of Information controlled the distribution of licences.

Article 40 prohibited any publication of³⁸

1. news that touched on the monarch or the Royal Family.
2. information on the number of armed forces, their arms and ammunition, or their movements unless the publication of such news is authorised by a responsible authority in the Armed Forces [, for example the Director of the Directorate of Moral Guidance,] as well as any news report, sketch, or commentary that touches on the armed forces or the security agencies;
3. articles and items degrading any of the religions or sects whose freedom is guaranteed by the Constitution;
4. articles which may harm national unity, instigate crime, or spread hatred and sow the seeds of rancour, disunity, or discord among the members of society;
5. the proceedings of Parliament’s closed sessions;
6. articles or news aiming at undermining confidence in the national currency;
7. articles or information which include a personal insult to the heads of Arab, Islamic, or friendly states;
8. articles or news reports that infringe the honour of individuals or their personal freedom, or tarnish their reputation;
9. news, reports, letters, or pictures that violate ethics and public decency;
10. foreign publications that contain any of the materials prohibited by this law will be denied entry.

The government added in May 1997 the following amendments to the 1993 Press Law:³⁹

1. the repudiation of the government’s vow to reduce its ownership in newspapers to no more than 30 per cent;
2. stern new capital requirements for newspapers, representing a twenty-fold increase over earlier previous sums demanded up to JD 300,000;
3. an increase in the power of the courts to impose a suspension of unruly newspapers without a need for government intercession;

³⁸ The Press and Publication Law of 1993 from “Text of Press, Publication Draft Law”. *Foreign Broadcast Information Services*, 19 March 1993.

³⁹ For more details, see “Jordan: A Death Knell for Free Expression? The New Amendments to the Press and the Publication Law,” *Human Rights Watch, Middle East*, 9:5 (E), p.8, June 1997.

4. strengthening of the censorship provisions of article 40 (a) expanding the no-go area coverage for journalists;
5. the violation of the Press and Publication Law would result in fines up to JD 25,000;
6. precincts on accepting chief editors, which led to limiting the choice.

The amendments were received with anger and led to confrontations with the government, especially when it decided to put the regulations into practice. The amendments, as Dr Amjad Hadad – one of the interviewees – states, legalised censorship and gave the authorities the right to punish journalists. It was in the powers of the judiciary to censor news of criminal investigations and to close down publishing houses under the provisions of national security, litigation or public interest. *Al-Majd* and *al-Mithaq*, along with eight other weekly newspapers, were suspended under the capital proviso. The reason for this was the aim of improving the standards of journalism in Jordan and to reduce the large number of weekly newspapers. The gloom pervading Jordanian society, which had been accumulating over the previous four years, reached its peak in the August 1996 riots (the Bread Riots) in southern Jordan. The government was intolerant of a number of journalists, chief editors, Party press and the tabloids as the following examples show:⁴⁰

1. Ramadan al-Rwashdeh, Jamil al-Nmri of *al-Ahali* newspaper (Jordan People's Democratic Party's weekly) and George Hwatmeh (the *Jordan Times* editor-in-chief) were tried in State Security Court for publishing articles about the torture of the prisoners accused of plotting a coup against the King.
2. The authorities cracked down on *al-Bilad* weekly newspaper.
3. Mahasen el-Imam, the editor-in chief of *al-Bilad* was forced to resign, as she told me in the interview, following an article about the debts of one member of the Royal Family in Jordan. She took the case to court and is awaiting the result.
4. Two editors of the satirical weekly newspaper *Abd Rabbu* were detained following an article accusing the government of corruption and an MP of hypocrisy. Later, the newspaper closed down.

⁴⁰ Information from Internet web site www.cpj.org/news/jord032897.html.

5. Nahed Hatter and Abdullah Abu Ruman, freelance journalists, were tried and fined because of their writings criticising the government's policies, especially the peace agreement. Hatter, a leftist writer, was attacked by four masked men, who tried to kill him in front of his wife and children. He spent some time in the hospital recovering from gangrene in the intestine as a result of the attack. He was then harassed by al-Kabareti's government (1996) several times. Abu Ruman was tried in State Security Court under the *lèse majesté* proviso.
6. The editor of *al-Hiwar* weekly, Abdullah Bani 'Isa, and the opposition leader Leith Shubailat were tried and imprisoned under the *lèse majesté* proviso. Bani 'Isa's imprisonment marked the first ever imprisonment of a journalist in the history of Jordan.
7. Others, such as Salamah Nimat and Lamis Andoni, were harassed by the government, following articles that they wrote in their newspapers. The first was detained after he disclosed shocking facts about corruption incidents. He mentioned a list of 24 Jordanian officials who were paid by the Iraqi government. When he predicted a change in the designation of the Crown Prince, which happened five years later in 1999, Nimat was forced to resign from the *Jordan Times*. Andoni was prevented several times from leaving the country and she needed King Hussein's intervention to solve the problems with the government. Andoni had left the country and now lives in the United States.⁴¹
8. Nayef Atawarah, Munjd al-Numerat and Khalid Kasasbeh left Jordan for the United States of America after being attacked and/or detained, following the various articles that they wrote. The first sells sweets, the second works as a waiter in a restaurant and the third works in a petrol station.⁴²

The officials defended all the actions taken against journalists. Dr Mutawi, the Minister of Information at the time, insisted that the government had to reconsider the Press Law *to protect* the unity and the fabric of society:

Violations by the press have damaged our relations with some Arab states and created a dark cloud. We were constantly receiving complaints from these states and we were also receiving complaints from Jordanian expatriates. Some of these papers have invaded the private lives of citizens and damaged their reputation and honour ... recently; matters have got out of hand.⁴³

⁴¹ For more details see *al-Quds al-Arabi* daily (London), 1 June 2000.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ For more details see "Jordan: A Death Knell for Free Expression? The Amendments to the Press and Publication Law", *Human Rights Watch/ Middle East* 9:5 (E), p. 7, June 1997.

From the above discussion we can generalise that censorship of the media has been of a stop-and-start nature and that its liberalisation has been a controlled version from the early 1990s. Compared with the situation before 1989, the media in general and the press in particular have certainly enjoyed more freedom since 1990. Nevertheless, high expectations have been handicapped by political conditions and, more importantly, by the norms of Jordanian society and the attitude of the political elite, which are unlikely to change for years. This is obvious from the authorities' unchanged attitude towards the media in the era of the new monarch, King Abdullah II. Although there were numerous signs that censorship of the media had eased, the old model of control has remained the same.

The decisions taken by the new government (1999) of Prime Minister Abdul Ra'uf Rawabdeh promised much and tried to reflect the feelings of the public. It produced new changes to the press law. The Lower House removed and amended two controversial articles from the amended Press Law of 1997: article 37 and 39. Article 37, as discussed earlier, banned journalist from discussing several topics, including criticism of the Royal Family or leaders of Arab/Islamic states or friendly nations, disclosure of military information, criticism of the judiciary or anything likely to harm national unity. The Lower House reduced the penalties stated in the article. But Attempts to repeal article 5 were rejected, however. Dr Hadad states in the interview that the legislators insisted on keeping the article, which states that "publications should respect the truth and refrain from publishing anything that contradicts the principles of freedom, national responsibilities, human rights or the values of the Arab/Islamic nation". Other steps were taken by the government to reduce the role of

the DPP in censoring Arab and international newspapers, publications, magazines and periodicals that are imported into the country. Accordingly, there was an increasing need to reconsider many decisions that had banned different kinds of books, which had been sent to the National Library.⁴⁴

Promising though these decisions were, the government in 1999 began to be less tolerant of the media. Thus, a court of first instance suspended *al-Majd* weekly on 14 February 1999. Although publication resumed after an appeals court overturned the suspension, the charges against the weekly newspaper remained. Then, editors of newspapers partly owned by the government and those of the official media came under fire. Mrs Mahasen el-Imam states in the interview: “From orders not to publish certain stories, to demands to publish material brought to them – written, edited and ready for the press – editors have become government employees set to appease the regime and not the [reader]”. Even those who wrote in foreign newspapers or magazines, as Ms A mentions in the interview, suffered from government censorship:

One example is that of Mustafa Hamarneh, the Director of the Strategic Research Centre at the University of Jordan. He was informed by telephone, while he was outside the country that he had been dismissed and that his job had been offered to someone else. The government is believed to have reacted in this fashion following Hamarneh’s article in the *Newsweek* magazine about King Abdullah II, in which he described the new monarch as a young man “coming from the mist [from nowhere]”. Hamarneh challenged the decision and remained in his position.

The government seemed uncertain about the decisions which it took and which puzzled all those in the media as well as the general public. The situation appeared to

⁴⁴ From *al-Rai*, 16 January 2000, Local News.

be that the King's orders or decisions regarding the freedom of the press were not implemented. In a speech on 5 October 1999, King Abdullah II called for a free but responsible press. He urged both the government and the journalists to work together *to protect* national unity, not *to harm* the reputation of the country, and to protect the citizen's honour and privacy.⁴⁵ However, it seemed that the King's decisions depended on their interpretation by the executive authorities. In other words, the decisions taken by the government illustrated the incongruity between what the King wanted and what his government implemented. This was evident in banning the privately owned daily newspaper *al-Arab al-Yawm* from obtaining news from Jordan's official news agency, *Petra*.

The reason behind banning *al-Arab al-Yawm* was the publication of news about King Abdullah II and Queen Rania when they were on holiday in a French resort. The news story was on the front page, under a picture in which King Abdullah II, wearing shorts, a chain and a basketball Nike T-shirt, (fig. 3.1). Queen Rania and King Abdullah II appeared to be walking in the streets of the French resort side by side.

⁴⁵ For more details on the subject see *al-Quds* daily newspaper, London, 6 October 1999.



(Fig. 3.1)

It soon became clear that the picture seemed to infuriate the Royal Family. The public were divided into three factions over the subject. Having said this, I am aware that things in Jordan are not dichotomous. The formation of the political scene in Jordan is not as simple as it may appear from the above division; indeed it is much more complicated. Generally speaking, however, the Jordanian socio-political scene is dominated by three groups of opinion. One group consists of the opinion formers, who include intellectuals, party leaders, Islamists, journalists and a few politicians. The second group consists of those who have the wealth, ex-Prime Ministers, the old guard, who include retired Army officers, and a few chief editors of newspapers, who tend to make their influence felt continually on political decisions. The third group, which is somewhere in between but whose role, however, is static and not dynamic. The members of this group form the majority in Jordanian society and they

are *reactivist* rather than *proactive*.⁴⁶ The first group refer to the second group as corrupt and pro-western, whereas they present themselves as nationalist and patriotic. The second group present themselves as a liberal group and accuse, in turn, the first group of being radicals. It must be said, though, that even within each of these groups there are radicals and moderates.

The first group, as far as fig. (3.1) is concerned, called for keeping the *conventional* values of society whereas the second group called for more openness in journalism. On the one hand there were the *radicals* who saw the picture as a bald-faced step and a clear violation of the provisions of the press law. Dr al-Kilani states in the interview that the “*radicals* regarded the publication of the picture a daring step, which shocked some members of society who are not used to seeing, and most of them do not accept seeing, private pictures of their monarch”.

On the other hand there were the *liberals* who led the campaign for a free press. They felt that the King would not mind being presented as an ordinary man or as one of the people. They supported their argument by two facts. The first was the King’s deliberate decision to appear in public wearing the national football strip on several occasions when the Jordanian football team was playing (fig. 3.2).

⁴⁶ These two terms were used by Professor Suleiman in one of the discussions at the early stages of



(Fig. 3.2)

They also pointed out at that the King himself had called for easing the censorship of the press. The second fact with which the liberals supported their argument was the visit by one of the officials in the Queen's office to Dr al-Hrub, the Chairman of the Board of al-Arab al-Yawm Foundation. The official emphasised that the Queen did not object to the publication of the picture as long there was no hidden agenda behind it.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the majority of Jordanians – the third group – seemed not to care about the debate. What the newspaper appeared to have done, from the conservatives' perspective, was to violate the social norms of Jordanian society.

⁴⁷ For more details on the subject see *al-Quds* daily newspaper, London, 15 July 1999.

The government acted at once. It stopped providing *al-Arab al-Yawm* with news and official advertisements from *Petra*, the agency that has a monopoly over the Royal and government news. Moreover, *Petra* blocked its Internet web site, thus leaving *al-Arab al-Yawm* little opportunity to obtain official news. Other official media, JTV in particular, started a publicity campaign against *al-Arab al-Yawm*, accusing it of sensationalism and sometimes of outright treason. In its attempt to redeem the situation, the newspaper published a big picture of the King wearing a suit; behind him appeared his personal military guard, (fig. 3.3).



(Fig. 3.3)

Under the picture appeared an apology, which had the form of a complaint, to the King and to the readers for not being able to publish the King's news. The apology said:

We apologise to His Majesty the King for not being able to cover His Majesty's activities. We do apologise to our readers too for not being able to publish official

pictures or news albeit official news in general and the Royal Court (the Hashemite Diwan) news in particular are provided by the agency [Petra].⁴⁸

By comparing the two incidents we can see clearly how censorship works in Jordan. The second picture was the complete opposite of the first picture in every single detail. The first picture showed the King wearing shorts, T-shirt and, a chain, and more importantly, it showed the Queen in casual dress, whereas the second picture showed the King in a formal dress. In the first picture the King and Queen appear side by side but in the second picture the King appears with his personal military guard. The news under the first picture was about the King enjoying himself in the French resort with his wife, whereas the news under the second picture was an apology to the King and to the readers for not being able to cover the King's news. The King accepted the apology, as it appeared to be, and ordered his government to resume the official services to *al-Arab al-Yawm*. Nevertheless, there was a delay in implementing the King's orders and the newspaper had to publish on the second day a complaint under another picture of the King. It still took sometime before *Petra* resumed its services to *al-Arab al-Yawm*.

This latest incident only widened the rift between the newspaper and the government. A number of journalists in al-Arab al-Yawm Foundation were detained without charge including, Shaker Jawahiri (Amman correspondent for the United Arab Emirates daily *al-Khalij* and a columnist at *al-Arab al-Yawm*), Sinan Shakdeh (*al-Masai'yah* daily (Evening News), Mohammed Tamaliyah, Abdul Karim Barghouti (*al-Bilad* editor-in-chief), Abdulhadi al-Majali, Azzam Yunis and Dr Riad al-Hrub

⁴⁸ My translation.

(Chairman of the Board). Although Jawahiri was detained for two days, I could not find any information about the charges. This incident was not mentioned in the official newspapers or any other media. Shakdeh was released after the King intervened. Barghouti, (aged 60) was detained for 14 days before being released, despite his heart problems and old age. He was detained following complaints by the Prime Minister's son.⁴⁹ Others, such as Abdulhadi al-Majali, a young journalist, who used to criticise the Prime Minister's (Abdul Ra'uf al-Rawabdeh) decisions, were alleged to be beaten severely by unknown persons and needed weeks in hospital to recover from the bad injuries caused by the attacks. Events accelerated when the police arrested the Chairman of the Board and owner of al-Arab al-Yawm Foundation, Dr Riyad al-Hrub, following a series of articles in which he harshly criticised the Prime Minister.

All these cases and incidents provide examples that censorship of the press in Jordan did not change over the years. The same restrictions that were applied before 1989 were applied in 1999. In other words, the decisions on the freedom of the press depend on the interpretation of the person in charge at a particular time in a particular era, as the following example will illustrate. Hajjaj, Jordan's renowned cartoonists, published a cartoon in which King Abdullah II appeared in disguise (fig. 3.4), or the Royal Catalogue of disguise as Hajjaj Called it:

⁴⁹ The suit filed against Barghouti was based on an article published in *al-Bilad* (15 August 1999) alleging that the Islamic Hospital complained to the Prime Minister that his son, Issam (lawyer), had harassed the driver of a bus transporting nurses. The alleged incident was to have taken place a month prior to the publication of the article in *al-Bilad*. Mr Ma'mun al-Rosan, Political Editor at *al-Bilad*, kindly provided me with that edition of the newspaper.



(Fig. 3.4)

Hajjaj referred to the King's several visits in disguise to some of the country's hospitals and factories to see for himself how things really worked without depending on reports from his men, which was praised by the public. The cartoon was published in *al-Rai*, Jordan's most popular daily. If we were to apply the same parameters that the government used to judge fig. 3.1, published in *al-Arab al-Yawm*, we should expect the detention of Hajjaj and the editors who allowed the cartoon to be published. However, that did not happen. Instead Hajjaj and the editors were praised for their daring cartoon. What is the difference then between the two incidents? Since they both took place while the same Prime Minister – Abdul Ra'uf al-Rawabdeh – was in office, why did the government take two different decisions? Is it because the second incident – the cartoon – was published in *al-Rai*, in which the government has a majority stake, whereas the first incident was published in a

private newspaper? Or is it because the first picture covertly criticised the King, that is, for spending money on holidays while his people were suffering badly from economic problems? Or was it because the King was wearing clothes that did not resemble the Arab Muslim identity (shorts, T-shirt and a chain are taken by many people to represent a Western image). Was it because the cartoon promoted the King as a caring, responsible monarch who was not fooled by reports prepared by his men? Or could the reason be that the first picture showed the Queen wearing casual clothes whereas she should always appear in formal dress?

A few months later, the King appointed a new Prime Minister, Ali Abu al-Raghib, who was known as a liberal MP and had his own views about privatising major government media organisations and reducing the government's shares in the major daily newspapers. The public anticipated changes in the media in particular. There have been steps taken towards achieving this goal but it is too early, at the time of writing, to see immediate changes in easing censorship of the press.

However, there was one major incident which reminded the public of the government's old attitude towards journalists. This was the dismissal of Jordan's top cartoonist Imad Hajjaj from *al-Rai* on 25 July 2000. Hajjaj's dismissal raised many eyebrows in the country and shocked even the General-Director of the newspaper, Dr Khalid al-Karaki. As General-Director, he tried to change the decision of the editor-in-chief to a one-month paid leave, pending reconsideration of his employment arrangements with the newspaper, instead of outright dismissal. When he failed to find a solution, Dr al-Karaki resigned. The dismissal followed Hajjaj's cartoon (fig

3.5), in which he indirectly mocked Fastlink, the first mobile telephone company in Jordan.



(Fig. 3.5)

The management of *al-Rai* was furious, fearing that the telephone company would withdraw its advertisements from the newspaper and decided to fire Hajjaj. In their attempt to ease the pressure from the readers, the editor-in-chief, Suleiman Qudah, issued a statement in which he insisted that the decision was not made because of the telephone company; it was a purely administrative decision following the cartoonist's continual attacks on the management of *al-Rai* on his Internet site. Qudah also mentioned that the main reason for the decision was that the cartoonist had *exceeded his limits* by criticising the way in which President Bashar Assad of Syria had come to power (fig 3.6), which threatened to harm Jordan's relations with Syria.



(Fig. 3.6)

However, this convinced no one, least of all Hajjaj, who insisted that his dismissal was because he criticised the media campaign of Fastlink.⁵⁰ The Hajjaj incident led to heated discussions. Nevertheless, despite the action of some of the members of the Royal Family in favour of Hajjaj (Prince Ali, King Abdullah II's younger brother, wrote a letter on his web site to support Hajjaj), *al-Rai* management went ahead with their decision. Hajjaj marked his departure by sending *al-Rai* his final cartoon, (fig. 3.7).

⁵⁰ For more details, see Arabic Media Internet Network at www.amin.org



(Fig. 3.7)

In the cartoon, Abu Mahjub, Hajjaj's famous character, is lying dead on the ground, covered by newspapers and surrounded by three persons: the mouth of the first is closed, the ears of the second are closed and the eyes of the third are closed. Hajjaj wanted his cartoon, as it seems, to resemble the famous proverb of the wise three monkeys: *See no evil, Hear no evil, Speak no evil*. The newspaper's firmness in making the decision was interpreted by many in Jordan as a challenge to the government's intention of wanting to privatise the newspaper.

7.4 The Internet

The huge developments in the mass media and information systems in the last decade of the twentieth century has contributed to globalisation. Jordan is no stranger to the revolution in the media and information. In most of the Jordanian cities satellite dishes are becoming, day after day, a standard feature. Mobile telephones are used by hundreds of thousands of people in country. Computer networks and Internet are a

common phenomenon in all the universities, most companies, and a number of café shops (Cyber cafés) since the Internet was introduced to the country in 1995/1996 by the private sector companies.

Jordan was among the first countries to keep up with the modern technology and its rapid changes. It was among the first countries in the Middle East to give permission to private companies to provide its Internet services. The affordable price of computers and their availability in universities, companies and hospitals have helped to keep pace with the increasing needs of a world about to enter a new millennium. Compared with neighbouring countries, Jordan looked, in the last decade of the twentieth century ahead of most of the Arab countries, including Egypt, in allowing freedom in Internet services. Internet restrictions in Arab countries are a form of censorship of the free access to information. The restrictions by governments in some Arab countries on the Internet have created new type of Internet users: the cyber refugees. To avoid the censorship applied on the various kinds of information by their governments, users of the filtrated Internet, such as in Saudi Arabia, take accounts in Jordan or Bahrain. Cyber refugees have to pay for the extra long-distance calls to enjoy uncensored access to the Internet.

Jordanian society was influenced by the introduction of the Internet, especially those in the media. Most Jordanian newspapers now have online editions on the World Web Wide. Publishers and bookshops benefited from the Internet. They made use of the marketplace by using the online service. Jordanians are able to view or order banned books, translations or foreign books online. Most Jordanian companies have

their own web sites. “Jordanian entrepreneurs are looking into the possibilities of launching private satellite stations, operating V-SAT stations allowing for faster, cheaper and secure communications or offering web-TV or web-casting services to Arab viewers” (al-Sharif 1998: 32). Several government Ministries and institutions, including the Intelligence Department (uniquely in the region so far), have their own web sites and e-mails through which these institutions explain their goals, receive comments and provide data to the public. Jordanians have used the Internet to discuss topics that the newspapers did not mention or had only half-covered, such as the anti-peace treaty views, honour killing, the imprisonment of journalists and other controversial decisions taken by the different governments in Jordan. The Internet users enjoyed greater freedom of information. The news that is likely to be censored in the daily newspapers or JTV and Radio are likely to be found in one of the electronic newspapers or web sites.

Internet Cafés (or cyber cafés as they are usually called) are formed in Amman and other cities in Jordan. The government did not restrict the opening of Cyber Cafés, and they required no more than the usual licence needed for any other kind of business.⁵¹ At the beginning, the Internet attracted only those who could afford to use it because it was very expensive. Unlimited Internet access services used to cost nearly JD 110 per month. The price subsequently dropped to JD 45 a month. Although the service was officially provided by one or two companies, the number of providers had increased to six companies by 1999. In spite of the rapid growth of Internet use in Jordan, the high telephone and Internet access costs remain an

⁵¹ See “The Internet in the Mideast and North Africa: Free Expression and Censorship”, *Human Rights Watch*, online article: [http:// www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)

obstacle to its popularity among all sectors of the society. All six providers were forced to rent their lines from the Jordanian Telecommunications Company (JTC), and were required to charge its high prices. Apart from this problem, Internet users in Jordan seem not to suffer from any form of censorship. In his letter to the *Human Rights Watch*, Marwan Mu'asher, a former Minister of Information and the Jordanian Ambassador to the United States, declared: "there is no blocking nor censoring by the government of the content of any web sites or of electronic communications via newsgroups, e-mail or other Internet forums".⁵² However, does this mean that the Internet in Jordan is censorship-free? Is it right to jump to the conclusion that in Jordan all users can enjoy the services of all web sites without any filtration or screening (censoring)? If we are to believe that the government has placed no restriction on the use of the Internet, then why do journalists and others fear the Press Law and its many amendments?

In spite of what Dr Mu'asher stated, censorship is applied to the use of the Internet. Jordan is no different from other countries which apply restrictions on the Internet. The providers of the Internet services in Jordan, such as NETS, have to comply with the cultural and religious norms of Jordanian society. Managers of cyber cafés also have to abide by these norms, such as the prohibition of foul language, attacks on public figures, and pornography. Criticism of policies implemented by public figures is allowed – but only just. Attacking, criticising or insulting the monarch and any member of the Royal Family or violating Islamic values is strictly prohibited on the Internet.

⁵² *Human Rights Watch*, 21 May 1998.

Cyber café managers act as censors. By Law they have to abide by the rules of censorship on the Internet. However, cyber café managers have to balance their financial self-interest against their legal obligations. If, for example, a customer is viewing something pornographic on the Internet, the manager will *try* to ban that site. However, the manager as a censor is also in the business of making money. If he bans too many sites, he will lose money. Therefore, it is right to assume that he will not be very strict in his application of the terms of his licence. The reasons for taking action will depend on the kind of customers who come to the café. These are young and, in a sexually repressed society, it is likely that pornographic sites will be viewed. It seems that the authorities are willing to tolerate this situation as long as there are no complaints. This shows the complete and subtle ways in which Internet censorship is applied in Jordan, as the following examples will illustrate.

Madyan al-Jazerah, one of the managers of *Books@Café*, the first café to open in Amman, said:

There is a Censorship Board in Jordan...and the way it works with us... is that if any of our computer managers notices that someone is on a site that is, for instance, *very* pornographic [note the word “very” in front of pornographic], we will request that they change to a different Internet site. Only in very rare instances do we actually go so far as to ask someone to leave or ... block the site from the network ... because there are a great many young people who do come here.⁵³

The government had to intervene at one time to pressurise one of the online publications, Amin (Arab Media Internet Network), to stop their violation of the law by operating without a licence.⁵⁴ The network provides news and commentary not

⁵³ This example is cited in the “North Africa and the Middle East- Jordan”, an online article found on <http://www.soros.org/censorship/>

⁵⁴ See “The Internet in the Mideast and north Africa: Free Expression and Censorship”, *Human Rights Watch*, online article: <http://www.hrw.org>

covered by the newspapers and other media, especially the local media. However, although during the first half of 1998 the Director-General of the DPP of the time, Bilal al-Tall,

Phoned to Amin's offices on numerous occasions, warning the staff that they were violating Jordanian law by operating without a license, he never initiated procedures to close down the agency ... [which] presented a challenge; it [is] like a newspaper but the [authorities] cannot treat it like a publication."⁵⁵

According to NETS, messages are not screened (censored) but they are read and if there is [transgression] we send a reminder, and we can suspend them from a [forum].⁵⁶

The unclear situation of the Internet laws in Jordan poses some questions: why did the authorities not include a specific article about Internet in the Jordanian Press and Publication Law instead of leaving it to the interpretation of various officials? If we are to accept the argument that the Internet was introduced in 1995/96, that is, two years after the Press and Publication Law was passed in 1993, why were no specific references made to the Internet in the many amendments in 1997 and 1998? Why were that the authorities very keen to control the press and publications but not the Internet? Was it because those in charge did not know the importance of the Internet as a medium of information and free expression? Or was it because they could not keep devising ways to stop the flow of information? Could it be that the authorities are realistic about the situation and realise that they cannot keep pace with the users who always come up with new methods of avoiding censorship, such as that of the

⁵⁵ See "The Internet in the Mideast and north Africa: Free Expression and Censorship", *Human Rights Watch*, online article: <http://www.hrw.org>

⁵⁶ Ibid.

cyber refugees? Or was it in the authorities' interests to leave the laws elastic and vague to achieve a number of goals, such as taking advantage of the vagueness when necessary to impose fines, yet attracting citizens from other countries to use the Jordanian facilities, to show how tolerant they were of public expression, and to promote the image of a democratic regime?

Whatever the answers are, the situation in Jordan gives the Jordanians and some citizens of neighbouring countries a chance to have access to uncensored knowledge and information. Consequently, the use of the Internet has helped in hastening democratisation and in overcoming the old traditions of censorship. It has become clearer than at any other time that political censorship cannot survive in a fast-changing world.

8. Censorship of the Theatre: Its Nature and History

The main problem for researchers in writing about the theatre in Jordan, let alone censorship of the theatre or translated theatre, is the scarcity of material on the topic. The major consequence of the lack of studies about the beginnings of theatre is the difficulty in finding examples to be examined. Despite these limitations, the interviews with some of those connected with the theatre in Jordan, such as Hisham Yanis, Lina al-Tall, Illyas Sabila, Mohammed al-Shwaqfeh and Basim Dalqamoni, their personal archives and the writings of two or three theatre directors and academics about the theatre were an important contribution to this study.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ For more details, see Mufid Hwamdeh (1985), *The Search for a Theatre*, and (1993), *Theatre in Jordan*, Ali al-Ra'i (1999), *Theatre in the Arab World*, and Abdul Latif Shamma & Ahmed Shuqm *al-Masrah fi al-Urdun* (n. d.).

Illyas Sabila, one of the interviewees, states, “theatre is prohibited in Islamic Law if it is used for obscenity or pornography. In 1898 and in 1918, for example, Sheikh Mustafa al-Ddars and the Imam of al-Azhar, respectively, attacked theatrical performances severely.”⁵⁸ It is worth mentioning here that the Greek and Roman dramas were prohibited, at one time, on a religious basis when the theatrical performances contained paganism, or ridiculed and tortured Christians by throwing them to the beasts. Women were not allowed to take up acting as a profession. Men used to perform the women’s roles. Men playing women’s roles was a common phenomenon in Greek, Roman and Shakespeare’s plays. Actresses, in all cultures, were very rare.

8.1 Theatre in Jordan: 1921–1965

In the first period, theatrical performances depended on individual effort and were influenced by the theatrical movement in the neighbouring countries such as Egypt, Syria and Iraq. The first performances, in the monasteries, were meant to teach the learners how to pronounce Arabic words, to gain confidence and a strong personality.⁵⁹ Over time, theatre became popular amongst the young men in the cities who faced one major problem: the female roles in the plays. The only way to overcome this problem was for men to play the women’s roles.

⁵⁸ For more details, see Mufid Hwamdeh (1985), *The Search for a Theatre* (in Arabic).

⁵⁹ Mufid Hwamdeh (1993), *Theatre in Jordan*, p. 19 (in Arabic).

As far as censorship is concerned, studies and documentaries on its application in the early stages of Jordanian theatre are rarely found. However, it is likely that the main censor was the Department of Press Censorship (DPC). This implies that the same rules as those applied to other forms of media would have been applied to theatre.

8.2 Theatre in Jordan: 1965–1989

Basim Dalqamoni mentions in the interview that:

The translated plays were mainly chosen by a *Reading Committee* or were suggested by an actor or a director. The actors and directors would examine the translated play before it was submitted to the Ministry of Culture for approval.” The *Reading Committee* (comprising actors, directors and producers) would localise the translated play by changing the original themes as appropriate. The *Reading Committee* would delete what was believed to be a violation of the cultural and religious norms. Jordanian drama was based on worldwide translated or adapted play texts. Nevertheless, the Jordanians did not perceive the translated drama as an awe-inspiring art, which, if they had done so, could have resulted in establishing theatre-going as a habit. The theatre, until the 1990s, was regarded purely as a place for enjoyment and laughter. The majority did not perceive the theatre as a serious form of art.

Generally speaking, the main forms of censorship between 1965 and 1989 were social values, religion and politics. The social values were more effective than the other forms of censorship because the successful plays in Jordan depended on recommendation by word of mouth. To convince the Jordanians to bring their families to see a play, the text should not include offensive scenes, foul language, or sex scenes. It is important to note here that most Jordanians would regard a kiss on the stage part of a sex scene. In addition to social values, people’s religious obligations have great influence on playwrights and directors. They, therefore, censor themselves by modifying the play text before performing it on stage. Playwrights and

directors avoid scenes or even sentences that might be misinterpreted by Christians or Muslims. In religion, as Yanis emphasised,

There are no grey areas, things are either white or black; the boundaries are very clear, we cannot violate the core values of religion ... We do not complain about religious censorship; we look at the *positive* side of it. If censorship has positive sides, then to us this is the positive side of it because it preserves the idiosyncrasy of the society.⁶⁰

Politics influenced the directors' choice of plays to be performed. Plays were strictly censored if the playwrights discussed the events of 1970 in Jordan or if their plays were pro-Nasserism, Ba'athism or Socialism. Russian plays translated into Arabic were also strictly censored. Criticism of King Hussein's political decisions was strictly prohibited in play texts. "It was even prohibited", as Yanis, states in the interview, "to have characters named Hussein in any play at one time in the 1960s."

The consequences of violating the taboos of Jordanian society were financial hardship, closure of the theatre or imprisonment. Financial hardship resulted from the audience's unwillingness to attend the play: social and religious censorship. Another penalty could be the complete closure of the theatre where the violation took place: political censorship. In extreme instances, imprisonment could be imposed. When asked if the Jordanian government ever closed theatres or imprisoned actors, playwrights or directors, Yanis replied,

I have been around in the field since the early sixties, and I assure you that no government ever, even during the martial law era, closed theatres or imprisoned dramatists. It could be [Yanis added laughingly], because we did not give them, the authorities I mean, the chance to do so; we knew where to draw the line.

⁶⁰ Nearly all those whom I interviewed, whether politicians, playwrights, directors or actors, emphasised the role of social and religious values in Jordanian drama.

Another form of censorship was the economic factor. Though less effective than the other forms of censorship, it constituted a problem to a certain extent in a country with meagre economic resources. Plays were either performed in the theatre which was at what used to be the American centre, 1st circle in Amman, or in the theatre at the University of Jordan outwith Amman. People were not always able to see plays because the theatre was, in the 1960s, outwith Amman, at the University of Jordan. This meant financial and physical hardship for some of the audience. Most of the plays performed in the theatre at the 1st circle were performed in English.⁶¹

The censors in this period were the Ministry of Culture, the playwrights, directors, the actors/actresses, the press and the audience. Dr al-Kilani states in the interview that playwrights had to submit their manuscripts, the translated plays or the foreign texts to the Ministry of Culture, which consisted of different sections and included policemen amongst its members. When censoring translated plays, the censors at the Ministry of Culture used to ask the translators, playwrights or producers to localise the text or to fix high-priced tickets for the play. In most cases, playwrights were asked either to delete certain scenes which are deemed offensive, or rewrite certain sentences that were deemed obscene. The censors' decision was final and playwrights did not have the right of appeal. To ensure that the playwrights and directors followed the modified text, as Basim Dalqamoni mentions in the interview, the censors of the Ministry of Culture would attend the first performance.

⁶¹ I was told this information by Professor Suleiman.

8.3 Theatre in Jordan: 1989–2000

Reinstating democracy in Jordan in 1989 influenced most playwrights. They became more daring in discussing local issues. Allegory and hidden criticism, which were the technique frequently used by playwrights and directors to avoid censorship disappeared gradually from play texts. Playwrights, directors and actors were encouraged by the government, particularly the Minister of Media and Information in 1991, Dr Khalid el-Karaki, to discuss social and political issues freely. The daring attempts of playwrights came to a halt in 1990/91 because of the Gulf Crisis. When the conflict came to a close in March 1991, the Jordanian cultural scene was already shattered. The political decision to back Iraq in the conflict with the United States of America and its allies had a profound effect on all aspects of Jordanian society, particularly drama and art. The feeling of most of the general public and MPs in Jordan was in support of this political decision. Plays criticising Iraq's decision to invade Kuwait were not allowed by the Ministry of Media and Culture or the Ministry of Media and Information. Most playwrights were forced indirectly, even if they wanted to do otherwise, to reflect the overwhelming public feeling for two main reasons. First, they wanted to avoid being censored by the Ministry of Culture. Second, they did not want to lose money by driving the audience away from their plays.

In 1991, Mohammed al-Shwaqfeh, one of the writers of the popular TV series *Abu 'Awad*, wrote a play, *Zaman al-Shaqlabah* (The Epoch of Chaos), for the same group of actors of the TV series. The main themes in *Zaman al-Shaqlaba* were the effects of democracy on Jordanian society. The play was a hit both in the box office and

from an artistic point of view, as shown by the critics' responses in the local newspapers.⁶² The performances continued daily for nine months. The main reason behind the massive success of the play might be the play text itself, which broke some of the political taboos in Jordan.

Al-Shwaqfeh meant to shock the Jordanian audience by his daring discussions about democratisation and by his criticism of the government in 1991.⁶³ Al-Shwaqfeh's second play was: *Hi America* in 1993. In *Hi America*, al-Shwaqfeh discussed, daringly, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and presented the two-facedness of the Jordanian demonstrators. They demonstrated against America in the evenings and stood in long queues in front of the American Embassy in the morning to obtain a visa to the States. Al-Shwaqfeh followed *Hi America* with a third play in 1994: *Hi Muwatīn* (Hi Citizen). This time he focused on the peace process, the most sensitive topic in Jordan. He gave a different account – from that of the government – of the peace treaty with the Israelis and declared that the gap would widen between the government and the public over the issue in the future.

The 1996 events in southern Jordan – what came to be known as the Bread Riots – motivated al-Shwaqfeh to write *Muwatin Hasab al-Talab* (Citizens by Order) in which, as he states in the interview, “criticised the government's economic policy and the exaggeration in the government (particularly the Prime Minister Abdul

⁶² I was shown these articles by the playwright himself.

⁶³ Interview with playwright and director Muhammad al-Shwaqfeh.

Karim el-Kabareti) and the Army's reaction to the people's protests" – the Prime Minister and the Minister of Information attended one of these performances. His latest contribution to the stage has been *'Ila man La Yahummohu al-Amr* (To Whom it may Not Concern) in 1998. In the play he concentrates, candidly, on the very details of the citizen's distress because of the economic problems and the Israelis delay in fulfilling the requirements of the peace treaty.

The Jordanian theatrical scene in the 1990s was open to all performances. The universities' troupes and the commercial troupes continued their performances and so did el-Fwanis troupe. The last faced frustrating times after being accused of normalisation with the Israelis, which is a violation of the Union of Jordanian Artists' by-laws. El-Fwanis was accused of being sponsored by a Swedish agency which is believed to be funded by Israel.

Another important troupe was Nabil wa Hisham. Their performances produced a challenge to censorship of the theatre. Nabil Swalha and Hisham Yanis were a Jordanian duo who attracted the attention of the Jordanian public and authorities alike by their daring performances. They discussed on stage many of what the Jordanian public considered sensitive issues.

Hisham and Nabil's first play was *Nizam 'Alami Jadid* (A New World Order) in 1989/90. They discussed the need for democracy in Jordan and its consequences for Jordanians. Their second play was *Barlaman wa Mizaniya* (A Parliament and A Budget) whose main theme was the general elections and the Jordanian budget. This

was followed by *Ahlan Mu'tamar Qimah Arabi* (literally, An Arab Summit...Welcome). After that they performed, *Salam! Ya Salam* (Peace! Tell Me About It) and *La Tadhak Nahnu Urduniyun* (Do not Smile! We are Jordanians). All these plays, as it might be deduced from their titles, are about the effect of democracy and the peace treaty on Jordanian citizens. The main themes of the plays were about politics, except in *La Tadhak Nahnu Urduniyun* (Do not Smile! We are Jordanians), in which they tried to show the influence of ten years of democracy in Jordan.

Nearly everybody was the target of Nabil and Hisham's satire; all the major political figures in the world, including King Hussein himself – although they imitated his voice, they did not impersonate his character on stage – were the subject of criticism in their plays. The only person whom they did not try to touch, as Yanis states in the interview, was the former Crown Prince Hassan. Before I asked why not Prince Hassan? Yanis added:

I hope you will never ask why, but it seems you will ask. My answer is the Prince is known to be a serious intellectual. We thought that he might not like the idea of impersonating him on the stage. I do not know why did we have that feeling of not daring to impersonate His Royal Highness in one of our plays or why we did not ask for a permission from his office in the Royal Court (the Hashemite Diwan). Yanis Stopped for a minute then added: the King [Hussein] is different; he even came three or four times to our theatre.

Both actors, especially Hisham Yanis, depended on their extraordinary ability to impersonate the subjects of their plays, as figs. 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, and 3.13 illustrate.



(Fig. 3.8): *Yanis as the late Sadat of Egypt.*



(Fig. 3.9): *Yanis as Castro of Cuba.*



(Fig. 3.10): Yanis as Arafat of Palestine.



(Fig. 3.11): Yanis as Madeline Albright, US Secretary of State (1997–2001).



(Fig. 3.12): *Yanis as Saddam Hussein of Iraq.*



(Fig. 3.13): *Yanis as the Late Assad of Syria*

However, Nabil and Hisham's theatre faced two setbacks. First, the strong criticism from numerous numbers of the public and the Jordanian Artists Union for performing in Israel, which is a violation of the Union's anti-normalisation policy. Second, the departure of one of the main actors and co-playwright, Nabil Swalha, for personal reasons, to England. The negative effect of the troupe's performance in Israel was enormous and it damaged their reputation in Jordan. However, the criticism was tempered after King Hussein attended one or two of Nabil and Hisham's plays.

Nabil and Hisham took the Jordanian drama to new realms and were the first, in 1989, to break the taboos, mainly political, on the stage. They raised the unthinkable. By impersonating the presidents of Arab states and imitating King Hussein's voice, they seemed to have disregarded the psychological barrier (self-censorship): not to impersonate the King or the presidents of friendly and Arab countries. It has to be said, though, that had they not had King Hussein's backing, especially when he heard about the incident of imitating his voice, life would have been very difficult for Nabil and Hisham's troupe.

Does all this freedom, however, mean that the censorship of the theatre was completely abolished? When democracy was reinstated in Jordan in 1989, there were serious steps taken by the government, the artist and press bodies to ease all forms of censorship of the theatre. The daring performances by the National Theatre Group (al-Shwaqfeh troupe) and by the Political Theatre (the Nabil wa Hisham troupe) advanced the calls for relaxing censorship of the theatre. The year 1994 was crucial

in Jordan for two main reasons: first, the peace treaty with the Israelis was signed. Second, the formal decision to abolish censorship of theatre. Mohammed 'Amayreh, the Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, announced at a press conference that the government had formally abolished all covert and overt forms of censorship of the theatre. Since 1994 the government's control, through the Ministry of Culture or that of Media and Information over theatre has been reduced. Yanis mentions in the interview, "the government is involved only to preserve the audience and the dramatists' safety, and to collect taxes or phone and electricity bills, just as it is in the United States of America".

None the less, there are four censors in the field of drama: first, which overlaps with the second, the dramatists' self-censorship; second, the people (audience) with their heritage of traditions, customs and religious values; third, the Palestinian issue and political imperatives of the Monarchy; fourth, the Union of Jordanian Artists. Al-Shwaqfeh states in the interview:

Although the government is the most important censor in the political arena the most important censor to me, as a playwright and a director, is the audience. From the dramatists' perspective, they are probably the strongest of all censors and the ones about whom dramatists have a thousand apprehensions. If the audience believes that a certain performance contains offensive references to social values or religious principles, it usually voices its protest by abandoning the theatre. Consequently, the dramatists would face financial ruin, and stormy criticism from society.

Out of self, social and religious censorship, Jordanian actresses refuse to appear on the stage in love scenes, to kiss or hug male actors, or to wear miniskirts, nightgowns or see-through clothes, as Lina al-Tall confirms in the interview. The following example sheds light on this particular point. After interviewing the director Basim Dalqamoni at Yarmouk University in the summer of 1999, he invited me to attend

one of his play's rehearsals. The play was performed by amateur actors from the University. In one of the scenes, an old woman appears on the stage speaking to a group of people – we know later that these are her daughters, sons and grandchildren. She looks anxious and impatient; we know from the dialogue that she is waiting fervently to see her son for the first time in ten years. When he finally appears on the stage, he shouts excitedly, “Ummy [Mum]!”, leaves his luggage behind and runs towards his mother. His two sisters shout, “There he is mother! There he is! The one with the blue shirt ... over there”! The mother moves two or three steps forward. She then stretches her hands towards him, and so does he. When he reaches his mother, he catches her stretched out hands and holds them for a few seconds and then says, “It was so long, Mummy”! She replies, “Indeed it was”! The first act ends exactly there.⁶⁴ When the director, Dalqamoni, asked me about the scene, I expressed my astonishment about the coldness in the mother and son's reactions. This scene is supposed to be charged with emotions; this cannot be the reaction of a mother and a son who had not seen each other for ten years. In addition, there is a clear contradiction between how the woman appeared (anxious and impatient), and how she acted when she saw her son. One expects the son to hug his mum with tears, kissing her cheeks, head and hands. Dalqamoni swiftly reminded me that:

These actors are university students, i.e. not professionals, they are nearly the same age, the play will be performed in Irbid and not Amman – Irbid is known to be a more conservative city than some areas in Amman. Therefore, it will not be acceptable to see these two students hug and kiss in front of their parents, brothers and sisters or their friends and colleagues. Even professional actors cannot hug and kiss on the stage whether the scene involves a mother and a son or a husband and a wife. The traditions correlate with religion to make the scene appears as you have seen it. If any director tries to convince his actors (male or female) to perform a scene that violates the values of society or religion, they will not listen. If they were to listen, they would be faced with an unsympathetic reaction from the audience and

⁶⁴ The dialogue is in Arabic: this is my own translation.

the press. In translated plays, directors change the scenes and the language to avoid obscene words to make them suitable for Jordanian society.

The third censor, the Palestinian issue, is also important. Since the Palestine war and the creation of Israel in 1948, the Palestinian issue was the dominant factor not only in the theatre but also in the socio-political life of Jordan. The war of 1967, the events of 1970 and the peace treaty of 1994 did not reduce the dominance of the Palestinian issue. There are two phases that any discussion of the Palestinian issue should take into consideration. The first is the Jordanian–Palestinian relationship over the years. Second, the Jordanian–Israeli relationship after the peace treaty of 1994. Before 1989, no playwright was allowed to discuss the political decisions on the Palestinian issue, the role of the Jordanian Army (the Arab Legion) in keeping its ground in Jerusalem in 1967 and the clash with the Palestinians in 1970. It has to be said that this was not exclusive to theatre, but to all forms of the cultural scene be it books, articles, translations or films. After 1989, the tense political atmosphere eased and dramatic works by the Nabil and Hisham troupe tested the government's censorship of the Palestinian issue. Although these were shy attempts, they paved the way to more relaxation in censorship of the Jordanian–Palestinian relationship. However, some aspects of this relationship have remained taboo and are usually avoided, particularly references to the events of 1970.

The second phase of the Palestinian issue was the demands of the Jordanian peace treaty with the Israelis. After 1994, the government in Jordan encouraged normalisation policies with the Israelis. However, most Jordanians opposed the peace treaty and refused to co-operate. Jordanians also condemned all those involved in

that policy. Nearly all the unions and associations in Jordan,⁶⁵ including the Trade, Bar, Labour and Artists associations, banned all forms of normalisation with the Israelis, including accepting funds from bodies that had relations with Israel. Jordanians, ten years after the peace treaty, still refer to Israel as the “enemy” and to the land on which Israel was formed as “the Occupied Territories of Palestine”. The actors who visited “the Occupied Territories” were dismissed by their unions and despised by the public. Thus, normalisation with the “enemy” became the ultimate professional crime in any cultural field. An example of this is Nabil and Hisham’s visit to “the Occupied Territories”. Another example is the accusations against el-Fwanis troupe of inviting an Israeli theatrical troupe to the Jordanian Theatre Festival, and being sponsored by a company funded by the Israelis.

The fourth censor is the Jordanian Artists Union. Its main task, when it was established in 1977, was to sponsor the theatrical movement in Jordan by disseminating the culture of theatre, looking for the best play texts and helping the new wave of artists in establishing their careers in drama. Over time, the Union expanded its role to include the patronage of all forms of art. The Union can act in a manner which falls in the realm of censorship. However, it does this for reasons which are based on the general mood of the public. When it was expected to defend its members against censorship, the Jordanian Artists Union took the responsibility of censoring its members’ works, expelling some of its members, humiliating and accusing others of normalisation with the enemy and accepting funds from foreign

⁶⁵ This is also true of all the unions in the entire Arab world, including Egypt, despite the 23-year-history of a peace treaty with Israel.

bodies. Some other decisions were paradoxical, as the following examples will demonstrate.

In the above-mentioned examples, the Union of Jordanian Artists took two *different* decisions against the same action, that is, Nabil and Hisham's visit to the Occupied Territories and el-Fwanis' alleged acceptance of foreign or Zionist funds. Though the accusations of the two troupes were, if confirmed, infringements of the Union's laws and by-laws, and required strong action, the Union punished el-Fwanis troupe only. Nadir 'Imran, one of the founders of el-Fwanis, its playwright and its chairman, was expelled from the Union, disgraced in the newspapers, and accused of accepting money from Zionist bodies, which could mean, in Jordan, an end of a career. The action taken by the Union against 'Imran was not convincing to all critics, artists and the public, even the most loyal to the Union. In a further escalation of the case, the two allegedly Zionist bodies, Dramatiska and SIDA, sent to the Jordanian newspapers a statement of their indignation about the action of the Jordanian Artists Union (fig. 3.14).


To the Editor
Al Arab Al Yawm Newspaper
Amman
Jordan

Instead of being proud and encouraged by the success of the Amman International Theatre Festival of Independent Theatre through the years, we experience that the Jordanian Artists Union attack the festival. It is extremely unbelievable that an union react against the interests of their members, threatens them, lies about them, humiliates them and expel a member they cannot stop.

The Artists Union is also giving false information to their members and to the Jordanian people about the Swedish interest in and support to the Amman Theatre Festival. We read in Jordanian newspapers that (Sida) "is an (NGO), a Zionist group that grant conditional funds for the benefit of the Zionists cause". These are very grave statements.

(Sida) stands for Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation. Cultural support forms part of the cooperation agreements between the Swedish Government and the Government of the West Bank and Gaza. Cultural collaboration and exchange with Swedish institutions make up an important part of most projects. In the field of theatre, dance and music, Sida works together with Dramatiska Institutet in Stockholm, University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre.

We have canalized a part of the support to the Amman Theatre Festival as a very important, yearly meetingpoint for artists from the Arab world and with international guests as well. It is of big importance for Palestinian artists from the occupied areas to participate in workshops and seminars, see performances by their Arab neighbours and meet colleagues. From Sweden we have the privilege to learn from, as well as be a part of all this. The festival has been highly noticed in Sweden on the radio and with articles in several magazines.



Dramatiska Institutet
Institution for Film, Radio, Television and Theatre, Filmhuset, Bergsgatan, Stockholm
University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre
Mail address: Box 27090, SE-102 91, Stockholm, Sweden
Telephone +46 8 465 13 00, Telefax +46 8 662 14 84
e-mail: amali@drainet.se, internet: www.drainet.se
Org. nr. 202100-1906 VAT nr. SE102100120601

(Fig. 3.14)

Both Dramatiska and SIDA rejected the accusations of being Zionist bodies and proved that the Swedish government was funding them. The Union's credibility was doubted because first, it launched unfounded accusations about its members. Second, it did not justify its hesitance in applying the same punishment of the members of the other troupe, Nabil and Hisham who did not deny their visit to the Occupied Territories and whose visit was celebrated by Israeli television. The Union, however, defended itself by emphasising that it asked Amman Council to take action against Nabil and Hisham by closing their theatre. This poses two questions. First, why did the Union turn to Amman City Council to close Nabil wa Hisham theatre instead of taking action themselves, as they did with el-Fwanis troupe? Why did they ask for the closure of the theatre when the violations require the actors to be expelled and shamed? What the Union could not state publicly as the reason behind their position was King Hussein's support for Nabil and Hisham's troupe: he had attended their plays more than four times.

It is clear that, over the years, censorship changed dramatically, fluctuating from rigid and severe laws to paradoxical, ambiguous and relaxed rules. In theatre, as Yanis says in the interview, "It took the Jordanian government many years to ease censorship of the theatre. Theatrical performances, however, pushed the margins of freedom wider, especially after the reinstatement of democracy in 1989".

9. Conclusion

Censorship in Jordan has been practised since the establishment of the Emirate in 1921. Being a small country with meagre resources, Jordanian governments fashioned their policies with an eye to internal and external factors. The change in applying strict or loose censorship laws depended on the influence of the internal and external factors on the socio-political life in the country. The main decisive factor that did not change, and is unlikely to change, over time when applying or easing censorship was/is averting danger from the throne and *protecting* the stability of the country. Censorship was applied strictly, for example, when the authorities felt the dangers of the strong influence of Ba'athists and Nasserites on the Jordanian decision-making in the 1950s. The fluctuation between applying strict and relaxed censorial decisions characterised Jordanian political decision over the years.

9.1 The Nature of Censorship in Jordan

Censorship in Jordan, as Abu Odeh states in the interview, is practised according to a law which reflects the people's morals, interests and values:⁶⁶

The legislature or the legislator enforces it through democratic political procedures that have expressed the will of the majority. Parliament debates the law of censorship and passes it on legal grounds, taking three main topics into consideration (the order is important): religion, politics and the morals of society. As a matter of fact, the parliamentary debate on censorship touches on everything connected with the modern state such as freedom of speech and human rights. From this very fact erupts the rift between the legislative authority (Parliament) and the executive authority (the government) and/or the public. On the one hand, the government sees in the enforcement of censorial rules a right to *protect* the fabric of Jordanian society, with its diverse ethnic and religious community, against the *evils* of literary works, political practices or social behaviour. In other words, the government takes *preventive* policies (censorial decisions) against expected actions or behaviour which might trigger the opposite force and result in a *threat* to the safety and security of the state. On the other hand, Parliament and/or the public challenge not only some of the

⁶⁶ Interview with Mr Adnan Abu Odeh.

censorial laws but also the rationale for their application. The result, especially after the reinstatement of democracy in 1989, is, relatively speaking, a change in the laws in favour of the public. Before 1989, the laws were hardly changed, or if they were changed, the change was done slowly and only if the government of the day saw the need for that change. After 1989, numerous changes took place and were under revision several times in a very short period, particularly between 1990 and 1993.

Although the amendments to the laws of the martial law era and the endorsement of Jordanian National Charter in 1991 were concurrent with the developments in technology and the mass media, people's need to express themselves freely increased. Many censorial decisions in the media field eased, which gave the public more means of overcoming the government's strict regulations, especially after the mushrooming of the Satellite channels. However, conflict between the legislative and executive authorities in Jordan over the freedom of expression continued.

There are many factors at work which make censorship part of the everyday scene of Jordanian society. These factors, over time, have been transformed into norms that have controlled the socio-political decisions. "These norms", as Dr Tarawneh states in the interview, "stem from three main overlapping fields: religion, the ethics and morals of society, and politics, which are the basis on which Jordanian Parliament makes its laws on censorship".

"Norms work as preventive procedures, or as the first defence, which decide for the censor what is consistent with religion, culture, the morals of the people, and the politics of the state", as Dr Tarawneh confirms in his interview:

This preventive nature could be illustrated in the following example. Jordan's foreign policy is strongly influenced by its need to balance its budget, which particularly affects its inter-relations with other Arab countries. In other words, the fact that Jordan receives financial aid from some Arab countries works as a censor. The

government applies preventive policies against the criticism or abuse in the formal media of any of the Gulf States' policies, for example, or of their leaders for fear that they will withdraw their financial help or because the criticism might *harm* the good relations between Jordan and these countries. Accordingly, the government informs Parliament of the requirement to keep good relations with other Arab countries and imposes regulations that prevent the media and journalists from insulting the Arab leaders at a time when the government is making every effort to obtain finance.⁶⁷ In most cases, there is a mutual understanding between the members of Parliament and the government over these matters.

Likewise, a mutual understanding between the government and Parliament is expected over religious matters. Normally, as Dr Abu 'Ayen states in the interview, religious issues do not create much trouble between the two authorities:

The official religion of Jordan is Islam and so it is expected that any violation of the principles of Islam or any damage to the relationship with other religious minorities is punishable by law. However, this might appear as an oversimplification of the real situation in which religion operates in society. The overlap between religion and all other aspects of life makes the description of the relationship between the legislative and executive powers look deceptively simple. Beneath the surface the actual state of affairs can be very different. For example, debates between the two authorities can be explosive over issues that might violate the core values of Islam or the morals of society. The conflict between the government and a considerable number of MPS was very bitter on issues such as stopping the debate on honour crimes, the Miss Jordan competition (in the summer of 1999), and the consumption of alcohol on the Jordanian Royal Airline flights. These were issues that the government, Parliament and the public had discussed extensively for months before they were presented in the Lower House for debate.

Mrs Mahasen el-Imam mentions in the interview that the issue of honour crimes, for example, took more than three years of discussion in the Parliament without reaching a clear-cut decision. "Though serious steps were taken with parliamentary legislation", Mrs Imam continues, "the killing of young women in the name of protecting the honour of the family – on the mere suspicion that they committed adultery – is still taking place in Jordan".

⁶⁷ Interviews with Dr Faiz Tarawneh and Adnan Abu Odeh. See also Laurie Brand's (1994): *Jordan's Inter-Arab Relations*.

9.2 The Censors

On the political scene, the censors, as the discussion in this chapter showed, are the Ministry of Information/ Culture, the Press and Publication Department (DPP), the Ministry of Endowments, and the Directorate of Moral Guidance in the Jordanian Army (the Arab Legion). In the social arena, the censors are parents (families) and self-censorship, in addition to the four censors in drama which were mentioned on pages 178-181 (section 8.3: Theatre in Jordan: 1989–2000).

9.2.1 Parents (Families)

The first censors are parents or families and their effect is permanently imprinted on their children's minds. Out of concern for their children, parents guide and control the children's behaviour towards an ideal. All the margins, fire lines, and the definitions of good and evil that stimulate the awareness in children's minds and shapes their conscience are decided by the parents' teachings during their children's early age. The parents' censorship could have a big influence not only within the home, but also on the environment. Parents, by suggestion or recommendation, have a censorial influence on what is taught in their children's schools, and can protest against certain books, for example, if they realise that they contain ideas which are considered unacceptable. Parents can also influence some of the government's decisions. They, with the support of other educational organisations, managed in January 2001, to effect two crucial changes in the Internet regulations. Out of concern for their children spending much of their time in Internet cafés, the parents forced the Jordanian government to exert more control over these places. Their point was very well taken and the Minister of the Interior responded by passing two new

laws requiring the application for a permit to open new Cyber cafés. According to the new regulations, children under 16 are strictly not allowed to enter any Internet cafés at any time; for people over 16, entry is by Identity card only.⁶⁸

9.2.2 Self-censorship

The second kind of censor is the conscience or self-censorship (the Policeman inside one's mind). It is the force or voice inside individuals that reminds them not to do certain things and tells them where to draw the line. Self-censorship has, in most cases, a defensive nature. It is that sense of precaution that individuals consult before expressing thoughts and views. The long practice of self-censorship becomes established as part of one's nature and may change, over time, into an obsession to control the behaviour of other individuals or their forms of expression. Under the overwhelming influence of this obsession, the individual develops what he might regard as a right – out of his cultural, religious, moral and educational heritage – by which he decides what society should read, listen to, or enjoy watching on TV, at cinema or in a video film. Self-censorship is expressed by all those who are involved in drama, for example, whether they are actors, playwrights, directors, lighting and sound engineers, producers and play-distributors. Actresses are unlikely to agree to wear revealing clothes in front of audience, or to kiss a male actor, let alone participate in love scenes on the stage, in TV films or cinema films. The director will not force his actresses to do so either.

⁶⁸ From *News at Eight*, JTV Sky Channel, 26 January 2001.

9.3 The Definition of Censorship

Censorship in Jordan, which might be applicable to most of the Arab world as well, could be defined as:

Watching over the different institutions and heeding the degree of their compliance with the concepts of Islam and Arab heritage. It is the rules and instructions that control the work in the media (journalism, TV, satellite channels, radio, video and Internet), culture, translations and publications. Censorship could be carried out by political institutions (the Ministry of Culture and/or the Media), religious institutions (the Ministry of Endowment), by committees in these institutions, officials, or it could be carried out by individuals working from their own cultural backgrounds and education.

Most of my interviewees agreed that the above-mentioned definition would best describe how censorship works in Jordan. When asked if censorship can be avoided, Dr Abu 'Ayen said, "yes it can. People managed to avoid censorship in the past, *Kalilah wa Dimnah* is the best example here, and they will always try to avoid it". Nearly all the interviewees agreed that people will always try to come up with different ways to avoid censorship and they will continue their efforts to push the margins of censorship as far as they can. Jokes, stand-up-comedy, puppet shows, symbolism, proverbs, drama and cartoons are among the most commonly used ways of avoiding censorship.

However, avoiding censorship, especially in politics, is not an easy task. Accordingly, many outspoken politicians, journalists, and men/women of letters were frustrated by the severity of censorship. Some of them emigrated to work in restaurants or petrol stations, some, when refused to leave, were alienated in their own homeland, and some others, who chose to fight for their principles, paid with their lives (the Khaliheh case in Jordan).

CHAPTER FOUR

Chapter Four: Translation and Censorship: Case Studies

1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to survey the content of a number of books and their translations that relate to different types of censorship; be it religious, political or moral. All the books were subject to different types of censorial decisions. The content of some of these books was, and still is, deemed dangerous. On one occasion, the content of the literary work gave rise to accusations of blasphemy, namely, Najīb Maḥfūz's Nobel Prize winner, *Awlād Ḥāritnā* (*Children of Gebelawi*), which translates literally as: *The Children of our Quarter*. Over the years, there have been many examples of censorship of the written word in the Arab world but their availability to the public was strictly limited and access to them has been difficult.

I will survey in this chapter the content of:

1. *Awlād Ḥāritnā* by Najīb Maḥfūz and its English translation, *Children of Gebelawi*.
2. *The Starr Report* (*The Washington Post* version) and its two Arabic translations, Dār al-Hilāl's *Monica wa Clinton: Faḍīḥat al-'asr* (Scandal of the Age) and Akhbār al-Yawm's *al-Layāli al-Ḥamrā' fī al-bayt al-abayḍ* (Steamy Nights at the White House).
3. *Jordan in the 1967 War* by Samir Mutawi and its Arabic translation *al-Urdun fī Ḥarb 1967* by the same author.
4. *The Moment*, a play by Geoff Gillham and its Arabic translation, *al-Laḥza* by the Queen Nur Foundation.

As it appears from the above-mentioned examples, only one book, Najīb Maḥfūz's novel, is translated into English; the rest are translated into Arabic. The case studies consist of two political works (a book and a political document), one novel, and one play. These are chosen as examples of religious censorship, moral censorship and political censorship. On one or two occasions both religious and moral censorship were applied to the same work because of the interplay between religion, politics and morality, as it was the case in *Awlād Ḥāritnā*. When the novel was published as a series in 1959 in *al-Ahrām*, a daily newspaper in Egypt, the writer was accused of blasphemy. The determination to continue with the publication led to demonstrations, which led to immediate interference from the Egyptian authorities. In other words, the novel provoked the *religious* feelings of the Muslim public in Egypt, who demonstrated to *safeguard the morals* of society. The result of the demonstrations was *political* action by the Egyptian authorities, which sent police forces to *protect the safety and security* of the state.

I restricted myself to these examples for two reasons. First, these books embody translations from and into Arabic, thus allowing us an opportunity to consider translations in a bi-directional manner. Second, because these works support the discussion in the previous chapters and represent the relationship between politics, power and religion. Although not published in Jordan, the importance of the first two examples, *Awlād Ḥāritnā* and *The Starr Report*, is due to the fact that Jordan is part of a bigger Arab and Muslim world. What is religiously, morally or politically banned in one country, let alone being Egypt, is likely to be banned in Jordan. It has been once said, 'books are *written* in Egypt, *published* in Beirut and *read* in Iraq'.

2. The Case Studies

2.1 Najīb Maḥfūz's *Awlād Ḥāritnā* and Philip Stewart's *Children of Gebelawi*

2.1.1 The story behind banning the novel: a historical milieu

Awlād Ḥāritnā is one of Najib Mahfuz's (1911 –) first novels. It was first published in Egypt as a serial in *al-Ahrām* daily newspaper for nearly three months (September–December 1959). The publication of the novel led to fierce reaction from the 'ulamā' in al-Azhar because they believed the novel was replete with blasphemy (*tajdīf*). The author was condemned and accused of heresy (*ilhād*). Although the 'ulamā' called on the newspaper's Chief Editor, Muhammad Hasanain Haikal, to stop the publication of the novel, he turned a deaf ear to their demands. The 'ulamā', with thousands of their supporters, demonstrated in front of *al-Ahrām* building, calling for immediate action to stop the publication of *Awlād Ḥāritnā*. All their efforts were in vain, however. Haikal stood firmly behind his friend Maḥfūz and continued the publication of the novel despite all the controversy that it caused. However, the public's demands were met as time progressed. The novel and all the discussion for or against it have been banned in Egypt since then. The only version of the novel published in book form is that published in Beirut in 1967 by Dār al-Adāb. Nevertheless, even the Beirut version is believed to have been subject to the publisher's censorship, which makes it an expurgated form of the original novel. The Ministry of Information in Egypt banned the circulation and selling of Dār al-Adāb's

version in Egypt. That said, some readers were able to obtain the novel from the Madbuli Bookshop in Cairo.¹

“The work ... did not appear in a book form in Egypt until October 1994” (Moosa 1997: 370). It might be that when Maḥfūz won the Nobel Prize in 1988, many modern literary critics, publishers, distributors and journalists thought that it was time to have the ban on the novel lifted, especially after the reference to *Awlād Ḥāritnā* in the Nobel Prize ceremony in Stockholm. Winning the Nobel Prize opened the debate over banning or publishing the novel once more. One daring step towards republication was taken by the newspapers *al-Masā'* (Evening) and *al-Aḥālī* (The People). Without the author's permission, both newspapers attempted to repeat what *al-Ahrām* did in 1959. But this time, Maḥfūz himself interfered to stop the publication.² *Awlād Ḥāritnā* was, in spite of the ban, the subject of much research and many studies that either agreed with al-Azhar's conclusion about the novel or challenged it. Nevertheless, the general mood in Egypt, especially the official one, was to keep the ban on the novel because the authorities did not want any friction with the strong religious establishment, which could lead to confrontation with the public. Maḥfūz did not oppose the action taken by the authorities to ban the novel.³

¹ An interview with the Kuwaiti daily newspaper *al-Qabas* on 31 December 1975, cited in Ibrahim al-Sheikh's (1987) *Social and Political Situations in Naḥīb Maḥfouz's Literature*, p. 164.

² For more details, see Yahya and Shukri (1989): *al-Tarīq ila Nobel 1988 'abra ḥara Naḥīb Maḥfūz*.

³ Samya Mehri (1994), *Egyptian Writers between History and Fiction: Essays on Naḥīb Maḥfūz, Sun 'Allah Ibrahim and Gamal el-Ghitani*, p. 22.

Over the years, Najīb Maḥfūz took a more *pragmatic* view of the whole issue of *Awlād Ḥāritnā* and the debate that accompanied it.⁴ Maḥfūz's pragmatic view was crystal clear after Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* was published. Maḥfūz supported the ban on Rushdie's novel because it protected the safety and security of society and the state alike and for the same reason he supported al-Azhar's ban on his novel.⁵ Despite Maḥfūz's pragmatic views, he was the recipient of a *fatwā* by Omar Abdul Rahman, the leader of an Islamic Group, who was given a life sentence in the US in 1994. Abdul Rahman issued a *fatwā* similar to the famous death *fatwā* issued by the late Ayatollah Khomeini against Salman Rushdie. Although many people, among them Muhammad Tantawi, Egypt's Mufti, condemned Abdul Rahman's *fatwā*, an attempt was made to assassinate Maḥfūz in 1994 in what was thought to be the fulfilment of Abdul Rahman's *fatwā*. However, Abdul Rahman himself from his prison denied that he had issued a *fatwā*:

This whole matter is so misunderstood. What I said – and this was when 'the Satanic Verses' – was making headlines – was, if we had *punished* Naguib Maḥfūz for what he wrote in 'Children of Gebelaawi', then Salman Rushdie would never have dared to write that book. This was a reply to a question asked by a journalist. It was a reply, an opinion. It was not a *fatwā* ... Al-Azhar should have brought Maḥfūz before a committee where he would have been judged. He would have been given an opportunity to defend himself, and, if found guilty, he would have been given an opportunity to repent.

(Cited in Stewart 1997: X)

Despite the overwhelming support for banning the novel, a few literary critics and writers offered different readings of it, such as el-Enany, Badawi, Ostle and Somekh

⁴ Yahya and Shukri (1989), p. 106.

⁵ Samya Mehriz (1994), p. 24.

among others. They regarded *Awlād Ḥārītṅā* as an allegorical (el-Enany and Badawi), a satirical (Ostle) or a philosophical (Somekh) work. El-Enany (1993: 25) considers the novel “an allegorical lamentation on the failure of mankind to achieve social justice and to harness the potential of science for the service of man”. Badawi (1985: 169) sees the novel as a link between modern times and Islamic history: “Maḥfūz here is giving his modern man’s view of the stories of prophecy narrated in the [Qur’an]”. Ostle (1989: 23) considers the novel a satirical work where:

[T]he social satire is as direct and bitter as in any of the works ... [for example] the Hara is unmistakably a quarter of old Cairo ... the people suffer from dirt and poverty, and are subject to the tyranny of organised bands of thugs ... [They] lived out in a context of violence, injustice and oppression.

Somekh (1991: 102) sees the novel not only as an allegory but also as “a philosophical tale”. Najīb Maḥfūz himself considered the novel an allegory. In an attempt to shield himself against the accusations of blasphemy, he called upon readers and critics to reread the novel as an allegory. On one occasion, Maḥfūz drew a comparison between his work and the famous allegorical work *Kalīlah wa Dimnah*. The religious elements in the novel are a camouflage or an overt political criticism of the Revolution of 1952. He meant his novel, as he expressed in the interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper *al-Qabas*, to be a criticism of the terrorism, imprisonment and tyranny imposed by those who claimed power in Egypt after the Revolution. He added that he used to ask the men of the Revolution whether they wanted to follow the path of the prophets or the path of the thugs. From Najīb Maḥfūz’s perspective, the Prophets’ stories are only an artistic frame for his criticism of the Revolution and the social system that came with it.⁶

⁶ An interview with the Kuwaiti daily newspaper *al-Qabas* on 31 December 1975, cited in Ibrahim al-Sheikh’s (1987) *Social and Political Situations in Najīb Maḥfouz’s Literature*, p. 164.

2.1.2 *Awlād Ḥāritnā*: Censors at work⁷

It is important at this juncture to reiterate the point that the novel was not published in a complete form either by *Dār al-Adāb* or as in *al-Ahrām*'s serialised publication of 1959. Consequently, the English translation of 1981 is not a complete version of the novel either. However, in the new 1997 edition of the translation, Stewart (1997: xviii) states, “[the] revised English edition can claim to be the only version in any language to full account of both the original sources [*al-Ahrām*'s version and *Dār al-Adāb*'s version]”. Although *al-Ahrām*'s version of the novel looks to be the more complete of the two Arabic versions, it is believed that, following Haikal's advice, Maḥfūz had deleted, edited or changed the content of the novel before its publication in the newspaper. However, Maḥfūz denied this claim totally. Maḥfūz insisted, on more than one occasion, that he had not succumbed to the pressure of al-Azhar or the public to make any changes to the serialised publication of the novel in *al-Ahrām*. When *Dār al-Adāb* published *Awlād Ḥāritnā* in 1967, the publisher, Suhail Idris, thought it necessary not to offend the readers, so he censored what he thought would provoke religious feeling. Most of these censored sentences, paragraphs and pages, were references to Gebelawi (which was taken by some critics and ‘*ulamā*’ to stand for Allah Almighty) and Qasim (which was taken by some critics and ‘*ulamā*’ to stand for Prophet Muhammad), which I will refer to in my discussion later in the chapter.

⁷ I owe the use of this example to Professor Y. Suleiman, who also supplied me with Kishk's book (see p. 193).

It was difficult in the beginning to decide which Arabic version Stewart followed when he translated *Awlād Ḥāritnā*. Therefore, I had to compare the Stewart's translation with the Arabic versions of *al-Ahrām* and *Dār al-Adāb*. Unfortunately, I could not compare *al-Ahrām's* text with the English text because *al-Ahrām's* text was not available to me. When I did not receive any reply to my letter and fax sent to *al-Ahrām*, I accessed the newspaper's Archives on its web site (the Internet address). Unfortunately, I was not successful because the archives go back only to 1998 and I needed to access the year 1959. Fortunately, I was able to find out most of the content of the version in *al-Ahrām* from a critique of *Awlād Ḥāritnā*, written by Mustafa Adnan in *al-Nūr* (al-Azhar's official newspaper). Adnan relied heavily on *al-Ahrām's* text in his critique. A comparison of *Dār al-Adāb's* publication and the English translation shows many incongruities, mainly because of the publisher's censorship of the Arabic version. The English translation contained the deleted paragraphs or sentences missing in *Dār al-Adāb's* version. The critique and the comparison with *Dār al-Adāb's* version show clearly that Stewart is more likely to have followed the text that was published in *al-Ahrām* in 1959. I was able to confirm the results of my comparison when I managed to obtain the new edition (1997) of Stewart's *Children of Gebelawi*. In the Introduction, Stewart benefits from both Arabic versions and has looked into the history of their publication.

2.1.3 The Offensive Areas in *Awlād Ḥāritnā*: Criticism Justified or Reasons for Censorship?

In *Awlād Ḥāritnā*, Najīb Maḥfūz describes the evolution of mankind from the beginning of the creation of Man until the 1950s. His setting is an imagined area near

Mukattam Mountain on the outskirts of Cairo. The characters in the novel are Egyptian (Cairene, in particular) and so are the traditions and the whole atmosphere. The characters suffer from the injustice and tyranny of some *futuwwa* (thugs, or to use Stewart's expression, strongmen) who force the people in the Alley to pay protection money if they wanted to keep themselves and their property safe. In these dismal circumstances, a group of good people arrive on the scene. They become the spiritual leaders because they carry out messages from the occupant of the "Big House" (which taken to represent Heaven) and try to accomplish social justice. Mahfuz sets the tone of his novel in the very first paragraph:

In the beginning of the site of our Alley was part of the desert at the foot of the mountain Gebel Mukattam. Nothing stood in this desert save the Big House that Gebelawi had built in defiance of the fear or barbarism and banditry. Its towering wall enclosed a garden to the west and the house with its three storeys to the east.
(Stewart 1997: 5)

(See Appendix 1.1 for Arabic text)

The novel consists of 114 chapters, which are divided into five major sections. Each section is called after its main character. The main characters are Adham, Jabal, Rifaa, Qasim and Arafa. Another main character, who has a menacing presence that permeates the novel, is al-Gebelawi. Idris is another of the main characters, though his presence is not as dominant as that of al-Gebelawi. Without much effort, the '*ulamā*' in al-Azhar, the literary critics and the readers easily decoded Maḥfūz's thinly disguised allegory and drew the link between these names and the names that they represent in Islamic history. It is crystal clear that the names represented the prophets of Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Therefore, Adham, Jabal, Rifaa and Qasim are, respectively, Adam (the sound is similar to Adham), Moses, 'Isa (Jesus Christ), and Muhammad. Arafa is Science; Idris is Lucifer (the Arabic word for

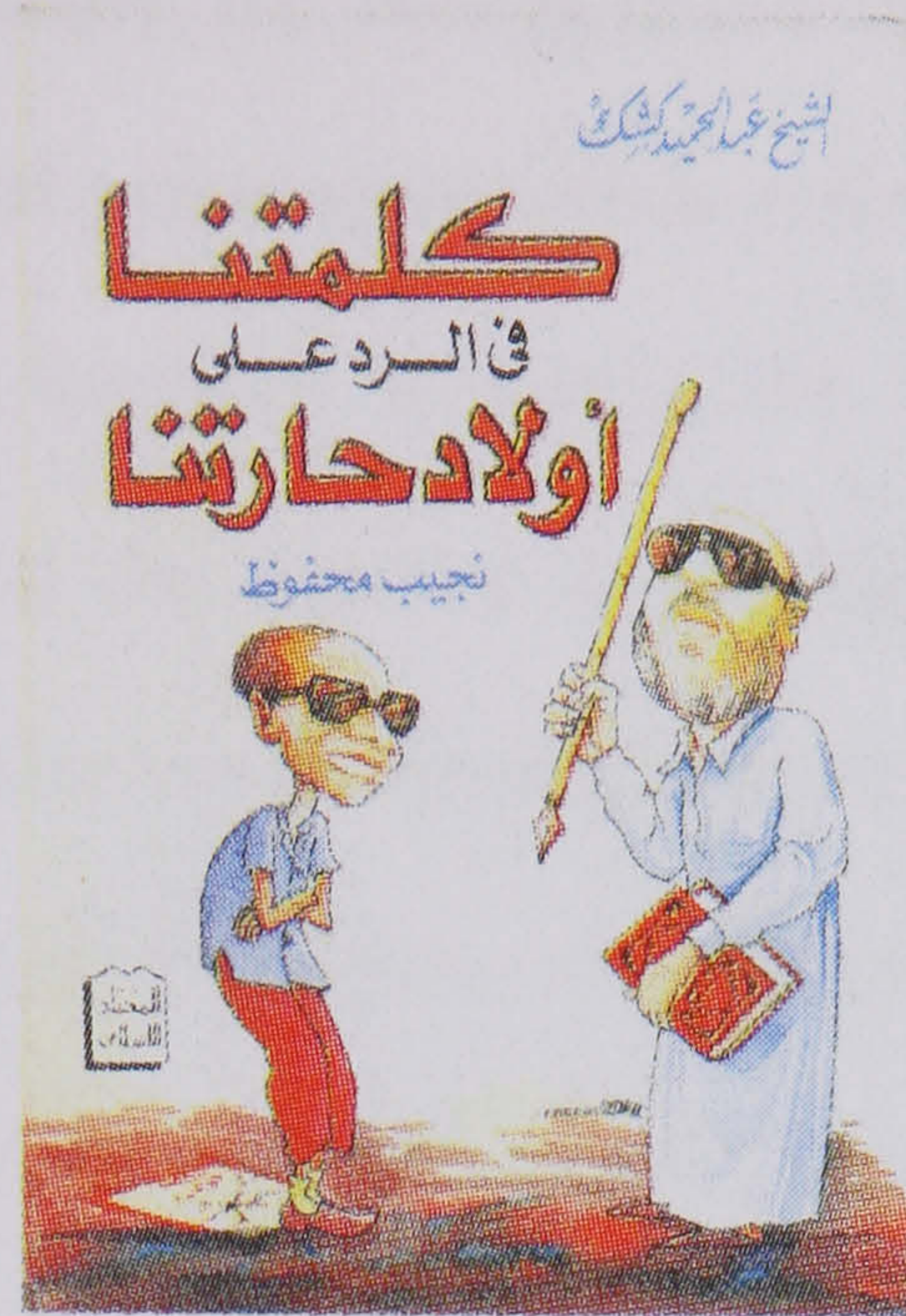
Lucifer is Iblis, the sound is yet again similar to Idris). Maḥfūz's lurking character, Gebelawi, is taken to represent Allah Almighty (God). His House and the Garden are taken to represent Heaven and Paradise. The Big House could also mean the Kaaba in Mecca. The 114 chapters of *Awlād Ḥāritnā* are a lucid parallelism to the 114 Suras (Chapters) in the Holy Qur'an.

Maḥfūz's allegory is the ground on which some of his critics based themselves in their attacks on the novel. They criticise Maḥfūz's thinly disguised characters, indecent references to Allah Almighty (God) and the prophets, and the comparison between the Holy Qur'an and the novel. The attacks on Najīb Maḥfūz ranged from accusations of blasphemy, cartoons in newspapers, or pictures on the covers of books, such as Yaḥya and Shukri's book (1989) and Sheikh Abdul Hamid Kishk's book. The former, *al-Tarīq ilā Nobel 1988 'Abra Ḥara Najīb Maḥfūz*, depicts Maḥfūz with

[H]is customary sunglasses, but it is a face with a difference. Ghastly cracks rend the skull, neck, cheek and front of the face ... in a small square at the top right-hand side of the cover, appears a small picture of Philip Stewart's English translation of *Awlād Ḥāritnā* ... covered by a large black X.

(Netton 1996: 70)

The cover of the latter, *Kalimatunā fī al-Radd alā Awlād Ḥāritnā* – no publication date is mentioned – (Our Response to *Awlād Ḥāritnā*) depicts Mahfuz as a humbly guilty student with his distinctive glasses, standing in front of Sheikh Kishk (fig. 4. 2).



(Fig. 4.1)

Sheikh Kishk, wearing a long white *gallābīya* and a white skull-cap, the classical image of a sheikh in the Middle East, holds a stick high in the air in a scolding manner. The stick has, at one end of it, a pen. In the other hand, the sheikh is holding the Holy Qur'an. On the ground, behind Maḥfūz, lies a torn certificate of the Nobel Prize. The attack on the novel and the author took more severe and serious forms. In 1994, Maḥfūz was the subject of an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate him.

Many critiques were written on the novel. Few studies tried to praise its artistic elements but the majority highlighted Maḥfūz's offences and called for the continuation of the ban. Some studies even denounced Maḥfūz, and later Rushdie, as blasphemers or apostates at a conference in Mecca.⁸ The most important attack on the novel was summarised in six areas, which al-Azhar, as well as other literary critics and society members regarded as atrocious. First, the theology of the death of

⁸ See Appignanesi and Maitland (1989), *The Rushdie Files*, pp. 189-190 and see the *Guardian*, 3 March 1989.

Allah Almighty (God). Secondly, the attempt to duplicate the Holy Qur'an. Thirdly, the indecent descriptions and presentations of or references to Allah Almighty, the prophets and their relatives. Fourthly, the notion that Prophet Muhammad is *not* the Seal of the Prophets. Fifthly, the indecent description of the relationship between Allah Almighty and the human beings. Sixthly, the distortion of some historical facts and the contradictions of the Holy Qur'an. Most of these offences were censored in Dār al-Adāb's version of *Awlād Ḥāritnā*, whereas they did appear in *al-Ahrām*'s version, according to *al-Nūr* newspaper. Some of these points were altered or edited.

The first area that is regarded as offensive in Maḥfūz's novel is the author's conception of the death of Allah Almighty (God). Maḥfūz states that Gebelawi (who has been taken by the 'ulamā' and many critics to represent Allah Almighty in the novel) has died:

Who could tell? He [Arafa] might find that he [Gebelawi] had gone senile and lost his memory, or that he *had died long ago*, unknown to anyone but the trustee
(Stewart 1997: 438)

This offensive idea, from an Islamic point of view, contradicts the core values of Islamic faith and doctrine. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah Almighty is *eternal*. A number of verses state clearly that everything in the universe will perish except Allah Almighty. In Sura al-Rahman (chapter 55), verses 26–27 and Sura al-Qasas (chapter 28), verse 88:

Whatsoever is on it (earth) will perish. And the face of your Lord full of Majesty and Honour will remain forever

(al-Hilali and Khan 1998: 768)

And invoke not any other 'ilah (god) along with Allah: La 'ilaha 'illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He). *Everything will perish save His face*. His is the decision, and to Him you (all) shall be returned.

(al-Hilali and Khan 1998: 565)

Moreover, the eternity and permanence of Allah Almighty is indicated in His 99 Beautiful Names, as stated by Prophet Muhammad: “Allah has ninety-nine names and whoever believes in their meanings and acts accordingly, will enter Paradise; and Allah is *Witr* (one) and loves ‘the Witr’” (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukharī, vol. 8, Hadith No. 6410).

At least two of these 99 Beautiful Names mean eternity: *al-Qayyūm* and *al-Baqī*. The Islamic faith emphasised Allah Almighty’s *Baqa*, which is referred to in the Islamic faith as timelessness and infinity (*qidam* and *sarmad*). The attack on Maḥfūz from this perspective took two forms: accusations of blasphemy and accusations of repeating the Western ideologies (God is dead), particularly that of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900). Nietzsche in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* announces the death of God: “This old saint [Zarathustra] has not yet heard in his forest that God is dead” (Penguin Classics 1969: 41).⁹ This ideology was popular at the beginning of the twentieth century, and fashionable in the 1950s and 1960s. It seems that Maḥfūz was aware of Nietzsche’s concept and he adopted it in his *Awlād Ḥāritnā*, especially since Maḥfūz’s BA was in Philosophy and the first stage of his MA in that subject as well.¹⁰

The second offence of which Maḥfūz was accused of was the attempt to duplicate the Holy Qur’an.¹¹ Maḥfūz was accused of attempting to introduce a new holy book or a

⁹ For more details on the Death of God theology, see Ian R. Netton’s (1996) *Text and Trauma*, John Llewelyn’s (1988) “Value Authenticity and the Death of God”, in G.H.R. Parkinson (ed.), *An Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Friedrich Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Penguin Classics, 1969, Ian R. Netton’s (1996) *Text and Trauma: An East–West Primer*, p. 74, and Gabriel Vahanian’s (1961), *The Death of God: The Culture of Our Post-Christian Era*.

¹⁰ El-Enany (1993), *Naguib Maḥfūz: The Pursuit of Meaning*, pp. 13–16.

¹¹ Yahya and Shukri’s (1989), *al-Tarīq ilā Nobel 1988 ‘Abra Awlād Ḥāritnā*, p. 99.

new Qur'an, which caused a furious response from al-Azhar, some literary critics and ordinary people. The accusation was based on Maḥfūz's attempt to rewrite the stories and events mentioned in the Holy Qur'an along the lines of Western ideologies, such as Nietzsche's, to suit the imagined life of his characters in the Alley. This is emphasised by the presentation of the 114 chapters in the novel, which are parallel to the 114 chapters in the Holy Qur'an. From an Islamic perspective, the Holy Qur'an is incomparable and inimitable (*i'jāz*). In other words, in Islam, the Holy Qur'an cannot be duplicated, changed, rewritten or edited because it is protected by the Divine Power. In three places in the Holy Qur'an Allah Almighty has challenged all human beings to try to produce a similar style, content or vocabulary. For example, in Sura al-Baqara (chapter 2), verses 23–24, Sura Yunis (chapter 10), verse 38 and Sura Hud (chapter 11), verse 13:

And if you (Arab pagans, Jews and Christians) are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down (i.e. the Qur'an) to our slave (Muhammad), then produce a surah (Chapter) of the like there-of and call your witnesses (supporters and helpers) besides Allah, if you are truthful. But if you do it not, and you can never do it, then fear the Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers

(al-Hilali and Khan 1998: 15)

Or do they say: "He (Muhammad) has forged it?" Say: "Bring then a surah (chapter) like unto it, and call upon whomsoever you can besides Allah, if you are truthful

(al-Hilali and Khan 1998: 303)

Or they say, "He (Prophet Muhammad) forged it (the Qur'an)." Say: "Bring you then ten forged surah (chapters) like unto, and call whomsoever you can, other than Allah (to your help), if you speak the truth!"

(al-Hilali and Khan 1998: 316)

The third area of offence in *Awlād Ḥārītā* is what was taken to be the insulting descriptions and presentations of and references to Allah Almighty, the angels, the

prophets and the Prophets' relatives. In *Awlād Ḥāritnā*, the 'ulamā', and literary critics believed that Maḥfūz presents Allah Almighty, his angels and the prophets (the characters that represented them) as ordinary people. The prophets, particularly Prophet Muhammad (who has been taken to be represented by Qasim in the novel), from the standpoint of the 'ulamā', are presented as drug addicts or drunkards. They are corrupted by hashish (hookah in the novel) and wine. This presentation, from an Islamic point of view, landed Maḥfūz in trouble. Although the prophets were human beings, they were *ma'ṣūmūn* (infallible or inerrant), and according to the Islamic faith they and their wives must be mentioned with respect. On pages 71, 75 and 76 (English translation pages 61 and 65), Maḥfūz refers to Gebelawi, which was taken by some critics and 'ulamā' to stand for Allah Almighty, as being Tyrannical and Proud:

He [Gebelawi] got this land as a gift without any trouble, and then he became proud and tyrannical

(Stewart 1997: 61)

(See Appendix 1.2 for the Arabic text)

He shouted: 'The answer to that is with monster [Gebelawi] hidden away behind the walls of his house ...'

(Stewart 1997:65)

(See Appendix 1.3 for the Arabic text)

Maḥfūz was interpreted to make insulting references to the Prophets of Islam, Judaism and Christianity and to some of their relatives. Maḥfūz's references to Jabal were taken, by some critics and 'ulamā', who believed that Jabal stands for Moses, as inappropriate. On page 177 (pages 156–157 in the English translation), Maḥfūz refers to Jabal as being *maṣṭūl* (drunk or a heavy smoker of hashish):

Lamplighter asked: ‘Weren’t you [Moses] high on some stuff? Gebel protested: ‘Being high never took away my reason’

(Stewart 1997: 156–157)

(See Appendix 1.4 for the Arabic text)

In this particular example, Maḥfūz not only refers to Jabal as *maṣṭūl* but also emphasises the idea of being “high on stuff” by making it his habit. Jabal, in his reply to Lamplighter, does not deny being used to being in a state of *maṣṭūl*. Moreover, being used to being *maṣṭūl* is beyond question; what matters though is that being “high on stuff” (*maṣṭūl*) never dulled his mental faculties.

Then, on pages 188 and 191 (pages 167 and 170 in the English translation) Maḥfūz describes Jabal as being naked while hunting snakes in the courtyard and in Lady Huda’s house:

Hamdaan’s people talked of how Gebel had stood naked in the courtyard and spoken to the snake in a secret language till it came obediently

(Stewart 1997: 167)

(See Appendix 1.5 for the Arabic text)

Then he stripped off his clothes and stood naked as the day when Lady Huda had lifted him out of the pool of rainwater

(Stewart 1997: 170)

(See Appendix 1.6 for the Arabic text)

Some critics and ‘*ulamā*’ interpreted Maḥfūz’s references to Qasim as being rude and offensive (Maḥfūz’s critics believe that Qasim stands for Prophet Muhammad in the novel). Qasim in the novel is brought up in the Alley of: *el-jarabī*’ (desert rats). Qasim lived, according to Maḥfūz’s narration, among an “ill-bred people ... who were the poorest and most wretched of all” (Stewart 1997: 275) – see appendix 1.7.

In another place, Maḥfūz describes Qasim as a womaniser:

Yahya looked at him [Qasim] disapprovingly and said ... And you're crazy about women. You watch for girls in the desert when the sun goes down. Qasim smiled.

– Is there anything wrong in that, Yahiaa?

(Stewart 1997: 284)

(See Appendix 1.8 for the Arabic text)

In the above-mentioned example Maḥfūz uses the same style of emphasising the indecent aspects of his characters, which he uses in referring to Jabal as being *mastūl* but keeping his reason. Not only does Qasim not deny being “crazy about women”, but also he does not see anything wrong in that.

Elsewhere, Maḥfūz describes Qasim as “neat and tidy as a girl” (Stewart 1997: 288), see Appendix 1.9 for the Arabic text. On page 339 (page 302 in the English translation), Maḥfūz portrays Qsim as corrupted by drinking and hashish:

Saadiq as usual understood his [Qasim's] feelings and fetched him a fresh mug of drink, which he drained to the dregs, still holding the hookah [hashish] in his hand.

(Stewart 1997: 302)

(See Appendix 1.10 for the Arabic text)

Then Maḥfūz tries to engrave, as it appears from the following example, in his readers' minds the description of Prophet Muhammad as a heavy smoker of hashish:

He [Saadiq] turned it [hookah] between finger and thumb under the lamp and spoke in Qasim's ear:

– Mixed with something sweet. And what an effect!

Qasim took it and put it in his mouth, smiling, already red-eyed from drink. Saadiq went on:

– Chew it first, then suck it.

(Stewart 1997: 303)

This paragraph was not included in Dār al-Adāb's version. It seems that the publisher, Suhail Idris, had censored it because it could have provoked religious feelings among Muslims.

Maḥfūz even suggests that Qasim could have been *maṣṭūl* when he first received the message from Gebelawi. Qamar, (who has been taken by ‘*ulamā*’ and many critics to stand for Khadijah, Prophet Muhammad’s first wife) asks him, when he has told her about receiving the message from Gebelawi (speaking to and hearing Gebelawi): “Had you taken hashish?” (Stewart 1997: 317). This sentence was not mentioned in Dār al-Adāb’s version. Once more, the publisher had applied censorship in order not to offend the religious feelings of Muslims.

Many of the main character’s relatives (who are taken to stand for the Prophets’ relatives) were also subject, from the ‘*ulamā*’ and some of Maḥfūz’s critics point of view, to Maḥfūz’s insulting references. On page 131, Maḥfūz refers to Jabal’s mother as: “a woman who sold chicken” (Stewart 1997: 114) – see Appendix 1.11. On page 213 Maḥfūz refers to the “woman” (who is believed to represent Virgin Mary) as: “The woman put down her bundle and sat on it, resting her belly between her thighs” (Stewart 1997: 189) – see Appendix 1.12. Then, on pages 347 and 351 (pages 210 and 313 in the English translation), Maḥfūz talks about Qamar’s (Khadijah) breast-feeding by using the word *thady* in two places. Stewart opted for the word “fed” and “nipple”, respectively, for the Arabic word *thady* in his translation: “She went back to the baby, who had started crying again, *and fed her*” Stewart (1997: 310) – see Appendix 1.13, and: “Qamar quickly *gave her a nipple*, then looked at him, searching anxiously to know more” (Stewart 1997: 313) – see Appendix 1.14.

The fourth area that Maḥfūz's critics interpreted as offensive in *Awlād Ḥāritnā* was that Maḥfūz made the figure Arafa, who was taken to stand for Science, the successor of Qasim (who has been taken to represent Prophet Muhammad). This notion, as the 'ulamā' believed, meant that Prophet Muhammad was *not the Seal of the Prophets*, which contradicts the Holy Qur'an, Sura al-Aḥzāb (chapter 33), verse 40:

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the *last (end) [seal]* of the Prophets. And Allah is Ever All-Aware of everything.
(al-Hilali and Khan 1998: 605)

In other words, Maḥfūz in the novel bestows on Arafa a prophetic power and regards him as another prophet. In so doing, Maḥfūz is interpreted as denier of the Islamic fact that Prophet Muhammad was the seal of, at least, 28 Prophets (those mentioned in the Holy Qur'an), and this aroused the wrath of both al-Azhar (Islamic establishment) and the ordinary people (society).

The fifth area that caused offence in *Awlād Ḥāritnā* was taken to be insulting references to the relationship between Gebelawi, taken to represent Allah Almighty, and the people in the Alley, taken to represent human beings. In many sections of the novel Maḥfūz draws a gloomy picture of this relationship. Nearly all the chapters include an eloquent description of Gebelawi's bad and unjust treatment of his children, grandchildren and the people of the Alley, and their resulting disappointment and distress. On pages 16 and 55 (pages 9–10 and 46–47, respectively, in the English translation), to mention but two examples, Maḥfūz describes the tyranny of Gebelawi (who has been taken to be Allah Almighty) and

the tragedies that took place in the “Big House” (which has been taken to be Heaven):

How many fine ladies had been turned by a single word into miserable beggars! How many men had reeled out after long service, carrying on their bare backs the weals made by leaded whips, bleeding from nose and mouth!

(Stewart 1997: 9–10)

(See Appendix 1.15 for the Arabic text)

Maḥfūz gives the same description of the “tyrant” Gebelawi on page 55:

He [Adham] burst out passionately:

Why did your anger burn without pity? Why did you love your pride more than your own flesh and blood? How can you be happy with your life of ease and plenty, knowing that we are trampled on like insects? There’s no forgiveness or sweetness or tolerance in your Great House, you tyrant.

(Stewart 1997: 46–47)

(See Appendix 1.16 for the Arabic text)

Maḥfūz, in the eyes of some critics and ‘*ulamā*’, was not honest in his description of the relationship between Gebelawi and his grandchildren, which they interpret as a relationship between Allah almighty and human beings. Maḥfūz’s critics believe that he distorted the facts mentioned in Holy Qur’an. Hundreds of verses in the Holy Qur’an state that Allah is *Raḥīm* (Merciful) and *Ghafūr* (Forgiving), which are also two of his 99 Beautiful Names. In other words, Maḥfūz, in the eyes of the religious establishment as well as the general public, had, yet again, moved away from the Islamic doctrine and tried to alter the holy text, the Holy Qur’an.

The sixth area that aroused the wrath of Maḥfūz’s critics was the alteration of some historical facts and the distortion of the Qur’anic facts, if the novel is to be looked at as Maḥfūz’s critics interpreted it. Mustafa ‘Adnan, in *al-Nūr* newspaper,¹² wondered

¹² *Al-Nūr*, 2 November 1988, column 1.

which sources Maḥfūz used when he wrote in the novel that Rifaa (who has been taken to represent ‘Isa – Jesus Christ) married Jasmine (who has been taken to represent Magdalene). When the people of the Alley discovered that Jasmine had disgraced them by spending the night in Bayumi’s house: “Rifaa asked: ‘would it satisfy you if I married her?’” (Stewart 1997: 226) – page 254 in *Awlād Ḥāritnā* – see Appendix 1.17. Then, Maḥfūz confirms the marriage on page 261: “The days that followed the wedding saw Rifaa’s life full of ceaseless activity” (Stewart 1997: 233), see Appendix 1.18.

Adnan accused Maḥfūz of distorting and contradicting the core values of the Islamic doctrine by announcing and confirming the death of Rifaa on pages 295 and 297: “Silence fell, broken only by his [Rifaa’s] death rattle” (Stewart 1997: 265) – see Appendix 1.19. Then, Maḥfūz confirms Rifaa’s death on page 297:

They [Arafa’s friends, Ali, Karim, Zaki and Hussein] worked together to free the body from the sand and lifted it carefully ... Then Hussein took his jellaba and put it on the corpse, and they carried it towards Bab el-Nasr.

(Stewart 1997: 266)

(See Appendix 1.20 for the Arabic text)

Maḥfūz, by confirming the death of Rifaa, (who has been taken to represent ‘Isa – Jesus Christ), had brought on himself accusations of blasphemy by opposing the Qur’an, Sura al-Nisa’ (chapter 3), verses 157–158:

And because of their saying (in boast), “We killed Messiah ‘Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), the Messenger of Allah,” – but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but the resemblance of ‘Isa (Jesus) was put over another man (and they killed that man), and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely they killed him not [i.e. ‘Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)]. But Allah raised him [‘Isa (Jesus)] up (with his body and soul) unto Himself and he [‘Isa (Jesus)] is in the heavens. And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise.

(al-Hilali and Khan 1998; 154)

2.1.4 Conclusion

The moment it appeared in *al-Ahrām* in September 1959, *Awlād Ḥāritnā* was the subject of criticism by al-Azhar, literary critics and ordinary readers, which led to demonstrations and calls to ban the novel. Despite that, the newspaper continued the serial publication for three months. Haikal was the editor-in-chief of *al-Ahrām* newspaper at the time of the serial publication of the novel. He had a close and special relationship with Nasser. These facts tell us that it is possible that people in power and or position of influence to escape censorship. However, once the newspaper finished its publication, in December 1959, the novel was banned and it did not appear in book form either. Public discussions or critical reviews of the novel were prohibited too. When the public seemed to have forgotten it, a publication by *Dār al-Adāb* in Beirut in 1967 revived its memory for a short time. Nevertheless, the novel was “officially condemned in 1968 by a committee of theologians from Al-Azhar” (Stewart 1997: viii). Then the novel again came to light when Maḥfūz won the Nobel Prize for literature. The attacks on the author and the novel have never stopped. Maḥfūz’s religious contradictions with the Holy Qur’an and Islamic doctrine, as some critics and ‘*ulamā*’ interpreted, have always been highlighted.

Awlād Ḥāritnā is probably the most important example of religious censorship in literature. The fact that nearly every kind of censorship was applied to *Awlād Ḥāritnā* emphasises the importance of religion in Muslim society. It also highlights the interplay between the different types of censorship. The religious offences in the novel, from the standpoint of the ‘*ulamā*’ and many literary critics, led to condemnation by preachers (sheikhs) at Friday prayers. Then people started to

demonstrate in the streets of Cairo against the publication of the novel. After that, the police had to intervene to *protect the safety* of the people and the *security* of the state. Finally, the official censors, the Intelligence Department and the Director of the Publications Department, decided to censor the novel and any publications for or against it.¹³

Clearly, as far as translation is concerned, censorship had affected the first version of the translation of *Awlād Ḥāritnā* mainly because of the many discrepancies between the original sources. There were many discrepancies between the versions of *al-Ahrām* and Dār al-Adāb. Stewart pinpoints 961 discrepancies between the two texts.

The discrepancies

“involved 1241 Arabic words, including 129 removed by the editors of the [publishers of] Dar al-Adab in a vain attempt to avoid offence ... in some two hundred cases the difference is significant even in translation, affecting who does what, with what or to whom” (Stewart 1997: xviii).

However, the 1997 edition of the translation, *Children of Gebelawi*, seemed to have benefited from the comparison of both the original sources of *Awlād Ḥāritnā* – *al-Ahrām* and Dār al-Adāb’s versions – as Stewart (1997: xviii) puts it in the introduction of the 1997 edition of *Children of Gebelawi*. The translator also seemed to have benefited from his interview with Najīb Maḥfūz as mentioned in the 1997 edition of *Children of Gebelawi*, page xiv.

¹³ An interview with the Kuwaiti daily newspaper *al-Qabas* on 31 December 1975, cited in Fatima al-Zahra and Mohammed Said’s (1981): *al-Ramziya fī Adab Najīb Maḥfūz (Allegory in Najīb Maḥfūz’s Literature)*. The fact that the Intelligence played a role in applying censorship to the novel was mentioned by Maḥfūz himself in an interview with the Kuwaiti daily newspaper *al-Qabas* on 31 December 1985.

The main parts that were censored in the Dār al-Adāb version were what was interpreted by some critics and ‘*ulamā*’ as being references to Allah Almighty and Prophet Muhammad, as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Most of these deleted words and sentences were mentioned by Mustāfa Adnan in his critique in *al-Nūr* on 2 November 1988. One example of the censored sentences, which should have appeared on page 498 of Dār al-Adāb’s version, is the reference to Gebelawi’s death.

The sentence is mentioned in *Children of Gebelawi* (1997) as:

“Who could tell? He [Arafa] might find that he [Gebelawi] had gone senile and lost his memory, or that he *had died long ago*, unknown to anyone but the trustee”
(Stewart 1997: 438)

The other examples are the references to Qasim (who has been taken to represent Prophet Muhammad). On page 303, Stewart mentions the following dialogue:

He [Saadiq] turned it [hookah] between finger and thumb under the lamp and spoke in Qasim’s ear:

– Mixed with something sweet. And what an effect!

Qasim took it and put it in his mouth, smiling, already red-eyed from drink. Saadiq went on:

– Chew it first, then suck it.

(Stewart 1997: 303)

This dialogue does not appear in Dār al-Adāb’s. Had it not been censored by the publisher, it would have appeared on page 339.

A third deletion was Qamar’s (who has been taken to represent Khadijah, Prophet Muhammad’s wife) question to Prophet Muhammad, when he told her about speaking to Gebelawi (which was interpreted as receiving the message from Allah Almighty): “Had you taken hashish?” (Stewart 1997: 317). This sentence should have appeared on page 354 in al-Adab’s version. In *Awlād Ḥāritnā*, Maḥfūz presented Qasim as a womaniser:

Yahya looked at him [Muhammad] disapprovingly and said... And you're crazy about women. You watch for girls in the desert when the sun goes down. Qasim smiled.

– Is there anything wrong in that, Yahiaa?

(Stewart 1997: 284)

The sentence should have appeared on page 318 in Dar al-Adab's version.

As far as censorship is concerned, Dār al-Adāb's version of *Awlād Ḥāritnā* was subject to censorship by the publisher himself, Suhail 'Idris. He deleted what was believed to be religious contradictions with the core values of Islam. The publisher's censorship led to many incongruities not only between the English translation(s) but also between it and *al-Ahrām* version. It seems that 'Idris did not want to offend Muslim feelings by including what was interpreted by some critics and 'ulamā' to be offensive. 'Idris' censorship affects the integrity of the novel. On the contrary, Stewart's (1997) decensorship of the novel preserves, as far as the consistency of the novel is concerned, the integrity of the novel. Nevertheless, the novel is regarded by Muslim 'ulamā' as part of the *dangerous* literature that *must* be banned, which may explain the official decision by a committee of theologians from al-Azhar in 1968 to ban Dār-al Adāb's version regardless of the publisher's censorship.

2.2 The Starr Report on President Clinton's relationship with Monica Lewinsky, (The Washington Post version), and the Two Arabic Translations published by Dār al-Hilāl and Akhbār al-Yawm

The Starr Report is the complete text of the Independent Counsel Kenneth W. Starr on President Clinton's relationship with Monica Lewinsky. The 453-page-report draws on the secret Grand Jury testimony of witnesses including President Clinton

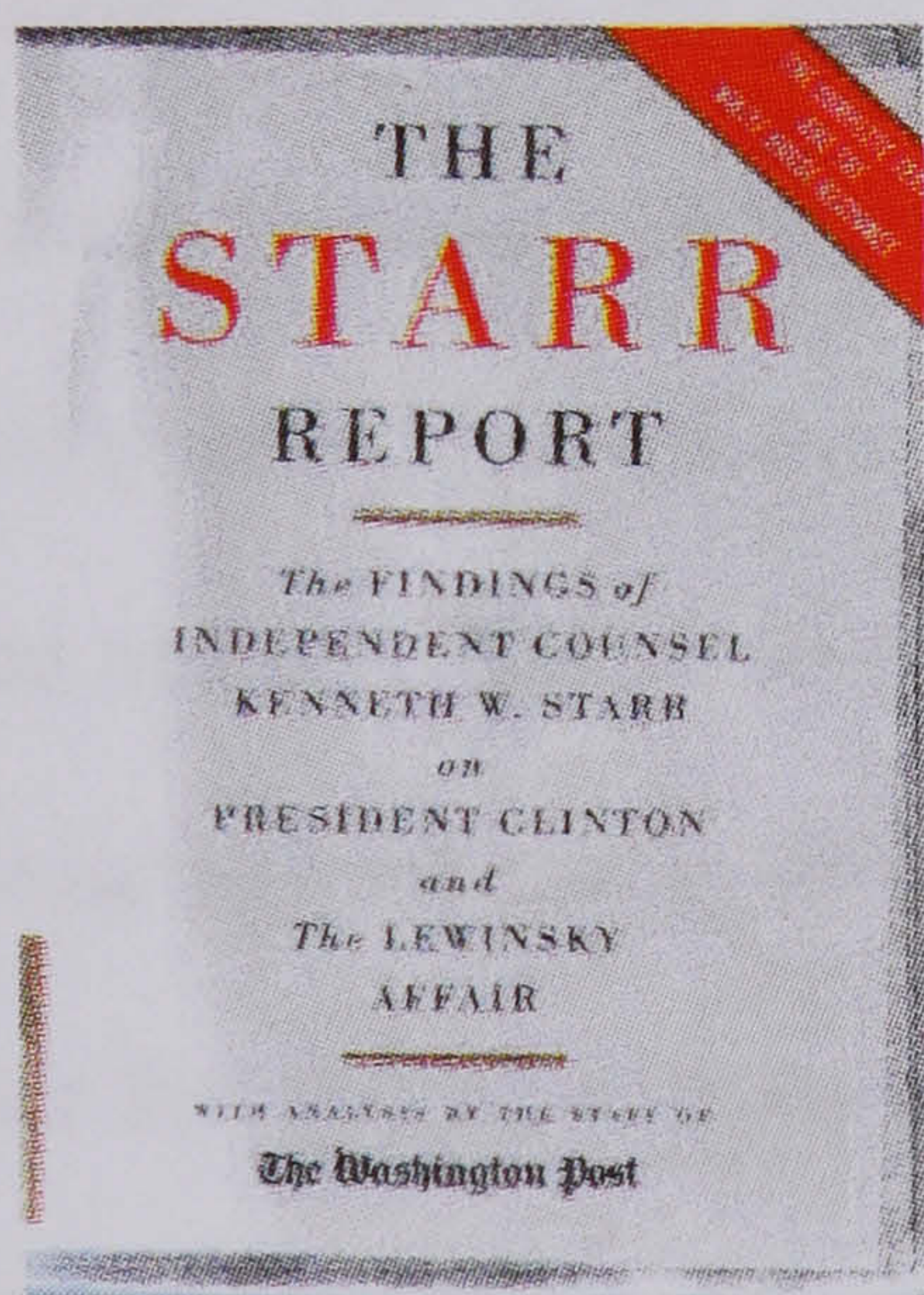
and Lewinsky. Starr accused President Clinton “of becoming sexually involved with ‘a young subordinate employee’ and then orchestrating a cover-up campaign using aides, friends and the resources of the White-House” (*The Washington Post* 1998: IX). *The Report* was the result of four and a half years of investigations. It was regarded as a historic document and became the central instrument of the House of Representatives’ investigation. “It listed 11 possible grounds for impeachment, including perjury, witness tampering, obstruction of justice and abuse of power” (*The Washington Post* 1998: IX.).

For nearly eight months, the world was gripped by the fever of the President of the United States’ (1992–2000) sexual relationship with Lewinsky. *The Report* was made public on the Internet after a long debate in the House of Representatives about whether or not to release Starr’s findings publicly. Once *The Report* appeared on the Internet, the Clinton–Lewinsky story was published in books in the United States. Weeks after it appeared on the Internet, *The Report* was translated into Arabic. It was available in the Arabic market (Egypt) in two versions: those of Dār al-Hilāl and Akhbār al-Yawm. The former translation was called *Monica wa Klinton: Faḍīḥat al-‘Asr* (Monica and Clinton: Scandal of the Age), and the latter *al-Layālī al-ḥamrā’ fī al-bayt al-abyaḍ* (Steamy Nights at the White House). Although *The Report* consisted of other matters that were very significant, such as perjury, witness tampering, obstruction of justice and abuse of power, the public’s main interest was in “the 10 sexual encounters between Clinton and Lewinsky, all in the White House” (*The Washington Post* 1998: XI). The abundance of sexual references and detailed description contained in *The Starr Report* constitute a good example for the study of censorship in translations into Arabic. That said, it is very difficult to compare the

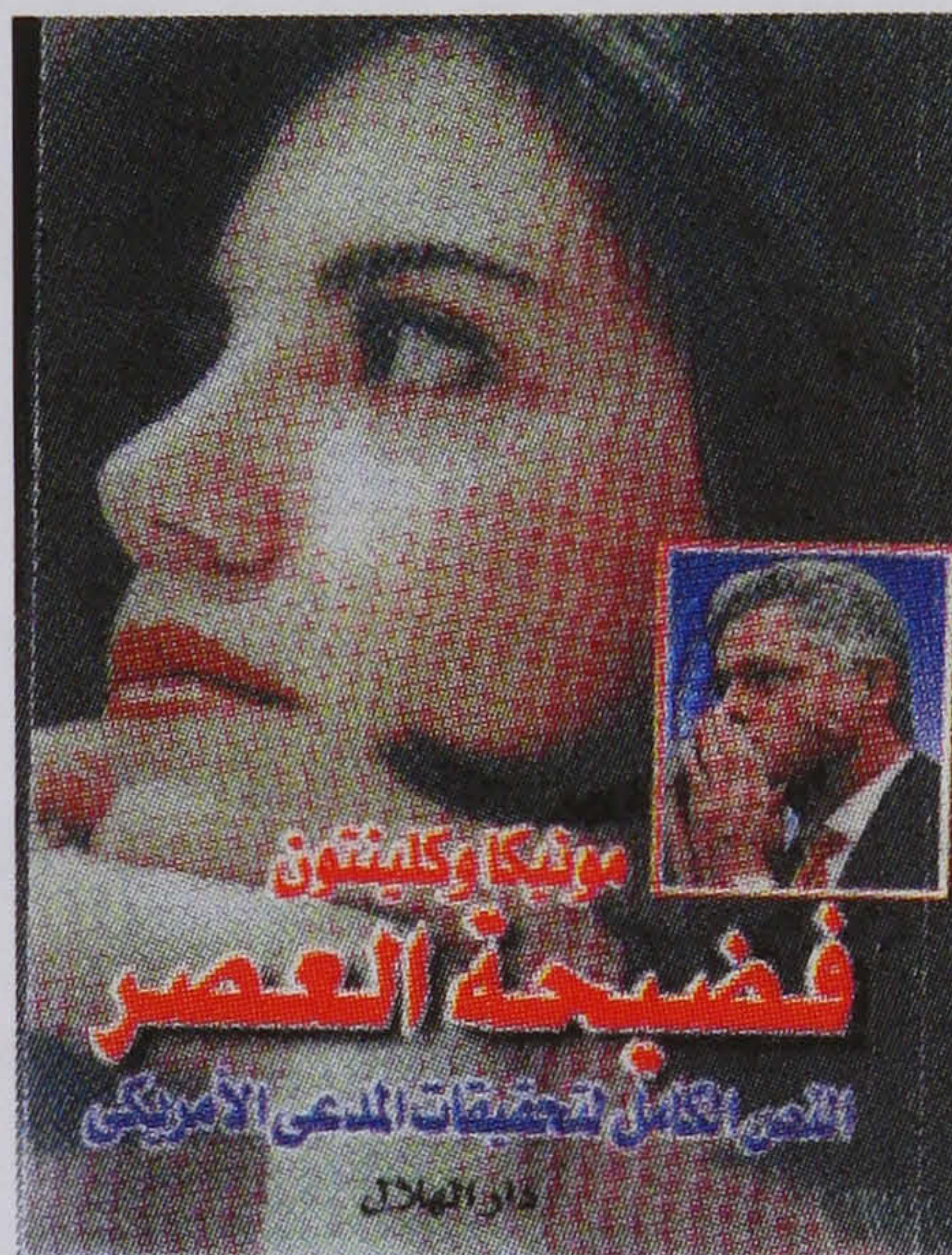
Arabic translations with the English text, owing to the fact that there is more than one version of *The Starr Report* in English. Therefore, I had to restrict myself to one version, *The Washington Post*, as my source text (ST). The reason behind my choice was that it was the only text available to me at the time of writing this chapter.¹⁴

Henceforth Dār al-Hilāl's translation – *Monica wa Clinton: Faḍīḥat al-'Asr* – will be referred to as target text A (TTA) while Akhbar al-Yawm's translation – *al-Layālī al-ḥamrā' fī al-bayt al-abyaḍ* – will be referred to as target text B (TTB). The Washington version will be referred to as the (ST).

The dissimilarity between the two Arabic translations and the ST is clear from the first glance at the covers of the three books (Figs. 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4).



(Fig.4. 2): ST



(Fig.4. 3): (TTA)



(Fig.4. 4) (TTB)

The cover of the (ST) is no different from that of any other official book-document; the design is simple (plain white edge with black). The cover design of the Arabic translations is totally different. The cover of (TTA) is a big photograph of Monica Lewinsky's face and an inset photograph of Clinton. She appears to be resting her

¹⁴ I am indebted to Professor Suleiman, who provided me with *The Starr Report* and the Arabic Translations, which are part of research project on censorship he has been researching over the past year and a half.

chin on her hand (the gesture that one would make if one were thinking deeply about something) and looking towards the far future. Clinton appears in the picture to be putting his hand in front of his mouth and nose. He is apparently clenching his teeth (the medical term is bruxism,) and his masseteric muscles are clearly shown (the gesture that one would make if one were under stress). The title of (TTA) is *Monica wa Klinton: Faḍīḥat al-‘Asr* (Monica and Clinton: Scandal of the Age) and is written in a red. The words *Faḍīḥat al-‘Asr* (Scandal of the Age) appear in a bigger font size.

The cover design of (TTB) is a portrait of Monica Lewinsky and Clinton. Monica in this drawing appears in a blue low-cut nightgown with gold bracelets on her left arm. Clinton, wearing a green jacket, appears behind her, holding her arms. Although Clinton’s hair, at the time of the “scandal” was white, he has been given a typical Western image: golden hair and blue eyes. Monica’s eyes are half-closed (voluptuous connotations), while Clinton has glittering eyes (infatuation or cunning). The title of (TTB) is *al-Layāli al-ḥamrā’ fī al-bayt al-abyaḍ* (Steamy Nights at the White House) and is also written in red. Both titles are followed by a statement in blue that the book is the complete text of *The Starr report*. On the cover of (TTB) appears the word *faḍīḥa* (scandal).

Obviously, the cover design of the Arabic translations shows more deviation from the formal designs expected for formal documents because the Arabic translations were not meant to be official documents.¹⁵ The publishers of both translations show more daring in the translations of the titles as well. However, the cover design of

¹⁵ See Suleiman, forthcoming.

(TTB) is more daring than that of (TTA), whether in the portrait of Monica and Clinton or in the choice of Arabic words. (TTA) appears to be more formal, with its illustration of a *photograph* of Monica and Clinton, and by the choice of Arabic vocabulary. Contrary to (TTA), (TTB) took a different path. The publishers opted for a portrait. With the low-cut nightgown and the gold bracelets on her arm, Monica is depicted as the typical belly dancers who appear in the Egyptian cinema films. The cover design and the words of (TTB)'s title have sexual implications. In both translations, the appearance of the word *fadiḥa* serves two purposes. First, it is “an attempt to sensationalise, and to confirm to the Arabs’ stereotypical views of the West as morally corrupt” (Suleiman, forthcoming). Secondly, the titles are meant to serve commercial purposes, that is, to attract more customers to buy the books. Red is used for the titles of the *SL text* and the two Arabic translations. It is the only colour used on the cover design of the *SL text*. The word *Starr*, which is written in a bigger font size than the rest of the title is also in red: *The Starr Report*. Red also appears in the right-hand corner of the cover in a design of a red ribbon sealing the book, which is meant to give the report the implication of confidentiality. Thus, in the *SL text* red is used to give the book an official appearance without any sexual implications. On the other hand, however, red in the Arabic titles is used for a different purpose or both. The sexual connotations seem to have been present in the publishers’ minds either to make the title resemble the sexual incidents in *The Starr Report* or for commercial purposes. This is clear from the fact that there is no reference to the other 11 allegations that constituted grounds for impeachment. Instead, the translators/publishers have focused exclusively on the Lewinsky affair in the title, apparently by the use of red in both Arabic titles, particularly the title of

(TTB), which is all about sex. (TTB) publishers and translators not only chose red for its sexual implications, but also used Arabic terms that have sexual connotations. The phrase *al-Layāli al-ḥamrā'* (literally, red nights) is not meant to be a mere contrast of red and white – *al-Layāli al-ḥamrā' fi al-bayt al-abyaḍ*. It does have sexual implications in Arabic culture – also in English: red light district. In the pre-Islamic era, prostitutes used to place *red* flags on top of their tents. The phrase: *saḥibāt al-rayyāt al-ḥumr* (the red-flagged women) was used to refer to brothels or to the prostitutes. The phrase *Layāli ḥamrā'* is used as a metaphor to mean steamy nights. Despite the implicit references to sex in the title of (TTA) and the explicit sexual references in the title and the front cover of (TTB), both translations were available in the Arabic market without any sign of censorship on their publication, but their content is censored.

The Starr Report is replete with sexual explicitness. Most of the descriptions of the sexual encounters were repeated over and over again in the testimony of both of Clinton and Lewinsky, and some other witnesses. Therefore, to avoid repetition, I will focus on particular examples that are deemed offensive or taboo in Arab culture. Priority will be given to the examples that included terms, sentences or phrases that are troublesome to the translators with an eye to the methods that they used to overcome the barriers of censorship.

2.2.1 The Examples of: Sexual + noun

The first problematic phrase is (sexual + noun). The adjective "sexual" is referred to in *The Starr Report* extensively. It is used with the following nouns: harassment,

relationship, contacts, affair, relation, encounter, intercourse, activities and desire respectively (as they appear in the *SL text*). Some nouns are repeated more than others, particularly the noun “contacts”. The adjective “sexual”, however, is replaced, in some instances with another adjective: physical, inappropriate or intimate. The (sexual + noun) phrases are repeated throughout the *Report*. The Arabic translators, in most instances, translated them literally and they continually repeated the same renderings.

On page 31, the phrases “sexual harassment”, “sexual relationship” and “sexual contacts” appear in Starr’s introduction in one paragraph (my emphasis):

This referral presents substantial and credible information that President Clinton criminally obstructed the judicial process, first in a *sexual harassment* lawsuit in which he was the defendant and then in a grand jury investigation.

(*The Washington Post* version 1998: 31)

The opening section of the narrative provides an overview of the object of the President’s cover-up, *the sexual relationship* between the President and Ms. Lewinsky.

(Ibid.)

Subsequent sections recount the evolution of the relationship chronologically, including *the sexual contacts*, the President’s efforts to get Ms. Lewinsky a job...

(Ibid.)

(See Appendix 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 for Arabic texts).

The three phrases are translated, respectively, in (TTA) as: *taḥarūsh jinsī*, *‘alāqa jinsiya*, and *liqā’āt jinsiya*, whereas in (TTB) the same phrases are translated as: *taḥarūsh jinsī*, *‘alāga jinsiya* and *ittiṣāl jinsī*.

In both translations the translators used the same Arabic wording for the first two phrases but differed in their choice for the third phrase. The translators of (TTB) opted for the word *ittiṣāl* instead of *liqā'at* for “sexual contacts”. However, the Arabic translations are neutral. They do not contain any sexual explicitness although the word *ittiṣāl* has more sexual connotation than the word *liqā'āt* in the phrase. The loss or gain in these examples is not a matter of censorship as much as it is a translator's choice.

The phrases “sexual affair” and “sexual relation” that appear on page 36 in the *SL text* are translated, respectively, in (TTA) as *'alāqah jinsiya* and *ittiṣāl jinsī ghair mashrū'*. These two phrases are not mentioned in (TTB), for the whole section of the *Report* which includes these phrases, Section C (ST page 36), has been deleted. It should have appeared on page 21.

The phrase “sexual encounter” on page 32 is translated in (TTA) and (TTB) in the same way as the phrase “sexual contacts” (my emphasis):

...[O]n July 28, 1998, Ms. Lewinsky turned over a navy blue dress that she said she had worn during *a sexual encounter* with the President on February 28, 1997.
(*The Washington Post* version 1998: 32)

In (TTA) and (TTB), “sexual encounter” is translated as: *liqa' jinsi*.

(See appendix 2.4)

The phrases “sexual intercourse” and “sexual activities” that appear on page 37 in the *Report* are translated in *A* as *jimā'* and *mumārasa jinsiya* (my emphasis):

...[T]he President maintained that there can be no sexual relationship without *sexual intercourse*, regardless of what other *sexual activities* may transpire.
(*The Washington Post* version 1998: 37)

(See Appendix 2.5 for the Arabic text)

The translators of (TTB) rendered “sexual intercourse” as: *nikah* ‘aw *mumārasa jinsiya*. *Nikah*, in Arabic, is the classical word for marriage, usually used in religious contexts. The translators of (TTB) also used the phrase *mumārasa jinsiya* as part of the meaning of “sexual intercourse”, which could be the nearest to the actual meaning of the (ST) word.

The translations in (TTA) and (TTB) of “sexual intercourse” as *jimā*’ and *nikah* could be taken as a matter of censorship. The translators’ choice was a classical Arabic word that conveyed polite meanings for the phrase “sexual intercourse”. In other words, the translators used cover-up words. *Jimā*’ is used, generally, in religious texts to refer to the sexual relationship between a husband and wife, whereas *nikah* is used to mean marriage. The problem that the translators faced in rendering such phrases was in choosing a word that could not offend the Arabic reader and at the same time conveyed the meaning of the (ST) word. A relationship like that between Clinton and Lewinsky is firmly prohibited in the Arab–Muslim culture because marriage is the only legal and legitimate form of relationship in which a man can have sex with a woman. Thus, the choices of acceptable or inoffensive words in standard Arabic are very limited. The other words would be: *mu’āshara*, *taghshāha* or *waṭi’aha*. None of these would fit in the Arabic text because these are religiously laden words and refer only to a husband–wife relationship. The colloquial vocabulary would be completely inappropriate here, even if they did convey the sexual meanings of the words, because of the cultural norms as well as the conventions of Arabic writing. The type of censorship applied here is self-censorship, publishers’ censorship or both.

The last of the (sexual + noun) phrases is “sexual desire”. On page 37 in the *Report* “sexual desire” is translated in (TTA), page 43 – the section is deleted in (TTB) – as: *raghba jinsiya* – see Appendix 2.6 for the Arabic text). The Arabic translation is a word-for-word translation of the English phrase. *Raghba jinsiya* is not an offensive phrase and it is frequently used in Arabic texts. The translators of (TTA) were not violating the conventions of Arabic writing.

2.2.2 The examples of *breast* and *fondle* and other words with sexual connotations

As mentioned in the beginning of this section, *The Starr Report* is replete with references to sex, which means that sexual terms are inevitable. In one paragraph of the *Report*, six words that have sexual references are mentioned (my emphasis):

[A] person engages in ‘sexual relations’ when the person knowingly engages in or causes... contact with the *genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks* of any person...

(*The Washington Post* version 1998: 37)

(See Appendix 2.7 for the Arabic text)

These words were translated in (TTA), page 43, as: ‘*ada*’ *tanasuliya, sharj, thanyāt al-fakhdh, thady, al-janib al-dākhli li al-fakhdh* and *ardāf*, none of which is as sexually explicit as its English counterpart. The translators of (TTB) used nearly the same wording except for the words “inner thigh” and “buttocks”, the former being rendered as *mafākhidha* (page 83) and the latter as ‘*iltiqā’ a’dā’ tanasuliya duna ‘ilāj*. Yet again the translators used euphemisms to render the sexual words in *SL text*. The translators opted for classical words or words that are found in scientific books. The translators of (TTB) added a classical word which is not used in the (ST)

text, *'ilāj* (penetration). Most of the Arabic words are neutral words that do not have strong sexual connotations. The translators were restricted by the norms of the Arabic culture and the conventions of Arabic writing that makes the use of any sexually explicit words inappropriate.

The only word, however, that seems to have sexual connotations is *thady* (breast), which is referred to extensively in the *Report*. The translators of (TTA) and (TTB) were inconsistent in translating the word “breast”. Sometimes they referred to it as *sadr*, which is the literal meaning of breast in Arabic but the translators did not use the word *nahd* in their translations at all. In The word “breast” is used with the verb “fondled” or “touched”, translated in (TTA) as *dā'aba* or *lāmsa* and in (TTB) as *taḥsas* or *yudaghdighu* (the literal meaning of this word is to tickle) (my emphasis):

On all nine of those occasions, the President *fondled* and kissed her bare *breast*
(*The Washington Post* version 1998: 38)

(See Appendix 2.8)

The words “fondled” and “breast” are translated in (TTA), on page 43, into *mulāmasa* and *sadraha* (Lewinsky). On pages 31 in (TTB), the same words are translated into *taḥsas* and *sadraha*, and on pages 33–34 they are translated into *yudaghdighu* and *sadraha*. The word *nahd* is used only once in both translations, on page 59 by the translators of (TTA) and on page 27 in (TTB), despite the fact it conveys a stronger sexual meaning. In Arabic, the words *sadr* and *thady* are neutral. Although *thady* and *sadr* have sexual connotations, the word *nahd* seems to have stronger sexual connotations. *Sader* and *thady* are usually found in scientific books or medical leaflets and refer to feeding babies; they have not strong sexual connotations compared with *nahd*, which is generally used, in Arabic poetry, to

describe young unmarried women. The translators' choice of the words *sadr* and *thady* resulted in a loss of meaning. It is unclear whether their choice was based on self-censorship or the publishers' censorship because the Arabic cultural and literary norms *do*, this time, allow the use of the word *nahd*.

In addition to choosing between Arabic classical words and neutral words, the translators followed three ways in translating the sexual words in the (ST): deletion, addition and literal translation of the sexual words, which meant producing empty words. On page 50, Starr describes Lewinsky's flirting with Clinton: "In the course of flirting with him [Clinton], she raised her jacket in the back and showed him the straps of her thong underwear, which extended above her pants" (*The Washington Post* version: 1998: 50).

(See Appendix 2.9)

The translators of (TTA) added the word *sakhen* ("intimate", or literally, hot) after the word "flirt", which adds more romanticism or intimacy to the relationship between the President and Lewinsky (translation gain). The word "underwear" is deleted and the word "pants" is translated into *khaṣīratuha* (her waist) instead of trousers. Likewise, the translators of (TTB) deleted the words: "straps" and "pants" but they translated the word "underwear" (*malābis dākhiīya*). In another instance the translators of (TTB), in their attempt to make their text look like an Arabic text, added on page 51 a new phrase which is not in the (ST) text (it would have been on page 79): *khal'at burgu' al-ḥayā'*, which is an Arabic proverb, (literally, "she [Lewinski] took off the veil of shyness"), meaning she became shameless.

In other instances, the translators seemed to translate the sexual words literally, which turned their Arabic equivalent into empty words, for example *jins shafahī* does not convey the same sexual meaning of its equivalent in English: “oral sex”. The phrase “oral sex”, on page 39, is translated in (TTA), on page 44 and in (TTB) on page 32, as *jins shafahī*. The word *shafahī* is the literal translation of “oral”.

2.2.3 The Cigar Incident (31 March 1996 Sexual Encounter)

On page 62, Starr mentions the sexual encounter of 31 March 1996, which, probably dominated all the other sexual encounters between Clinton and Lewinski: “At one point the President *inserted a cigar in Ms Lewinsky’s vagina*, then put the cigar in his mouth and said: ‘it tastes good’...” (*The Washington Post* version 1998: 62).

(See Appendix 2.10)

The translators of (TTA) translated “inserted a cigar in Ms Lewinsky’s vagina” as: *thūmma ‘adkhala fihā sīgāran* (literally, then he inserted a cigar inside her). The translators’ replaced the word “vagina” with *fihā* (inside her). In (TTB) the translation of the same sentence is more daring.

The translators of (TTB) rendered “inserted a cigar in Ms Lewinsky’s vagina” as: *qāma al-ra’īs bi-waḍ’ al-sīgār fī makān ḥassās bi-jasadiha* (literally, the President inserted the cigar into a sensitive place in her body). The word “vagina” is replaced with *makān ḥassās bi-jasadiha*. The same rendering, *makān ḥassās* is used to refer to the word “genitalia”. Both “vagina” and “genitalia” were deliberately overlooked in the Arabic translations. The translators opted for less offensive words that did not breach the cultural and literary norms of the Arab society. The cigar incident in *The*

Starr Report is a striking example of censorship in translation. Not only is self-censorship applied in this particular example but also in all the other types of censorship in the Arab world.

2.2.4 Conclusion

The Starr Report constitutes a good example of moral (interplaying with religious) censorship in translation because it contains unedited and extensive sexually explicit material, which is normally offensive to many people and regarded as inappropriate for publication in books or newspapers. Even *The Washington Post* publishers were aware of the offensive nature of the explicit sexual material in the text and they alerted their readers with an appropriate warning on page LIV. The translators of (TTA) and (TTB) tried to give Arab readers the full details of the historic document, as it came to be known. Nevertheless, at the same time, they remained vigilant not to overstep the limits of Arab culture and literary norms. In spite of the daring attempts, whether in the cover design, the title or the rendering of sexual expressions, especially those of (TTB), the Arabic translators fell far short of producing sexually explicit texts. They avoided the problematic words or phrases with different types of camouflage, such as opting for neutral classical words, addition and deletion, or by using empty words. This, as Suleiman (forthcoming) puts it, “represents the difference in the attitude towards the encoding of sex in writing between the American and Arab societies”. It is worth mentioning in this regard that the difference in the attitude even differs from one Arab society to another. The Arabic translations of *The Starr Report* were published in Egypt, which is known as a liberal Arab country. To a certain extent, the translators and publishers in countries such as

Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia or Syria are expected to have more freedom to put their daring attempts into practice compared with countries such as Saudi Arabia and most of the other Gulf States. The acceptance of sexual terms, descriptions and material is much more likely in Egypt, for example, than in Saudi Arabia. The parameters of encoding or decoding sexual material depend primarily on the strength of the public attachment to the culture and religion. Sometimes, however, the difference in the attitude towards sex differs between groups of people in the same country. Jordan constitutes a good example in this respect. The difference between people's attitudes is very obvious if one travels a few miles by bus or car from the west end of Amman (rich residential area) to the east end. The gap becomes even bigger if the bus heads towards the northern or southern parts of Jordan. The people living in the western pockets of Amman would have no need for Arabic translations to read about the Clinton–Monica affair. They would have known about it from the English media or some of them would have read about it while travelling to and from the United States. In other words, the attitude towards sex in one society could determine the form of censorship applied to publications and translations. Some societies, America for example, would accept publications like *The Starr Report*, and obviously they would not mind translations of the same nature. Other societies, the Arab *liberal* societies for example, would edit, expurgate or rewrite certain pages of sexually explicit publications and translations. There would be other societies within the Arab world, conservative societies, who would not only ban these publications but also not consider the selection of the translations of sexually explicit publications in the first place.

2.3 Samir Mutawi's *Jordan in the 1967 War* (the SL text and the translation)

2.3.1 The publications of wartime activities

Publications about war are prime subjects for censorship, especially by the defeated countries. Chiefly, the publications censored are of foreign source or written in the language of a foreign culture. The translations of these publications are also targeted by censors. Censorship, in this respect, ranges from editing and rewriting to banning the publications and their translations entirely. This practice seems to occur in all countries regardless of their level of liberality. In liberal democracies like Britain, journalists during the Falklands War in 1988 used to send their articles to the British government's Security Services before publication. In other words, the journalists were censoring themselves to *protect the security* of the country and the morale of the people. Furthermore, until recently, no publication was allowed about the activities of the British government's communications headquarters at Bletchley Park (Oxfordshire), during World War II.¹⁶ Hyland and Sammels (1992: 20) mention two other examples of British censorship during the Gulf War in 1991. BBC Radio "drew up a proscribed list of records, including 'Walking like an Egyptian' by the Bangles, 'Midnight at the Oasis' by Maria Muldaur and 'Billy don't be a Hero' by Paper Lace" (cited in Suleiman forthcoming). Despite the long time that had passed since the Japanese lost the war, the World War II issues remain sensitive to the Japanese authorities as demonstrated by the following example. Kishwa Shobo Publishing

¹⁶ Interview with Dr Lalor, Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, Edinburgh University, February 2000.

Company was the target of death threats if it released the translation of the American bestseller *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of the World* (1997). It was written by Iris Chang and describes the 1937 Nanking Massacre in China. The Japanese deny that such an event took place and they emphasise the inaccuracy of the information contained in the book.¹⁷ The translation has not been published in Japan.

The Arab world is no different from other nations. Publications about the wars in which the Arabs have taken part undergo strict scrutiny by the censors. The types of censorship applied to a certain publication, however, may vary from one Arab country to another. This variation depends on the levels of freedom in individual countries. The authorities in a particular country are usually sensitive to any release of information that contradicts their version of war activities. They suppress the information related to wars in an effort to safeguard national security. The 1967 war with the Israelis marked the greatest catastrophe in the modern history of the Arab world. Of all the Arab countries, Jordan was the most affected by the shattering defeat by the Israelis. Jordan lost in three days the main cities in the West Bank: Nabolus, Hebron, and most importantly Jerusalem. Mutawi's book presents Jordan's account of the war, the reasons for the country's participation in the war and a description of the six days of calamity. For this purpose, Mutawi interviewed surviving Jordanian participants in the war, including politicians, military commanders, intelligence personnel and King Hussein.

¹⁷ The information about the Japanese example is taken from Judy Wakabayashi's article, "Subversion, Sex and the State: The Censorship of Translation in Modern Japan" in *Translation Quarterly*, nos. 16 &17, October 2000.

2.3.2 Which Version is the Translation?

In order to decide whether *Jordan in the 1967 War* was a translation into English or a translation into Arabic, which was also written/translated by Mutawi, I had to know the number of versions of the book. The reason is that the author in the Acknowledgements thanks his Professor for his guidance in the *thesis*. This means that Mutawi's thesis could be the pre-text of the *Jordan in the 1967 War*. Mutawi confirmed in the interview that his PhD thesis at Reading University was the pre-text for the book *Jordan in the 1967 War*.¹⁸ The difference between the pre-text and the text is in their aims. The author's aim in the pre-text was to achieve an academic degree, thus his pre-text is an academic-theoretical-work. The author's aim in the text is different. His main interest was the war from a Jordanian perspective.¹⁹ My next step was to decide which of the other two versions, *Jordan in the 1967 War* and *al-Urdun fī Ḥarb 1967*, is the (ST) text and which is the (TT) post-text. Knowing which is which helps in tracing the amendments, deletions or additions, if any, made to any of the versions. Although the first step in answering these questions is to look for the year of publication, this could be misleading. The year of publication does not mean that one book was *written* before the other, rather it means that one book was *published* before the other. Judging from the English captions in the Arabic version, it becomes clearer that the English version was written and published first. *The Middle East Journal*, *The Washington Post* and *Middle East International* would not have had the chance to voice their views of the book had it not been written in English first. Thus, Mutawi's thesis is the pre-text, the English version is the (ST)

¹⁸ Interview with Dr Samir Mutawi, 31 December 2000.

¹⁹ Ibid.

text and the Arabic version is the (TT) post-text. Next, I had to decide whether Mutawi translated or rewrote the Arabic version. In the interview with him, Mutawi stated, “the Arabic version was *an adaptation* copy or *not literal* translation of the English version.”²⁰ In other words, Mutawi edited, changed and summarised some of the information in the English version. Mutawi thought that some of the information in the English version was directed to the English reader, who might not be aware of the way in which politics was practiced in the Arab world. Obviously, what is suggested by Mutawi’s answer is that the inclusion of the deleted or modified information would be unnecessary for the Arabic reader.

The two books, *Jordan in the 1967 War* and *al-Urdun fī Ḥarb 1967*, look identical. Both have the same cover design: a red background and a black and white picture of a soldier in the centre. The picture shows a Jordanian soldier on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. However, comparing the two versions soon proves the falsity of the first impression. The content of the two versions is not identical. Not identical here refers to the difference not at sentence level nor even at paragraph level, but at chapter level. Surprisingly, the first two chapters (pages 1–46) in the English version are not included in the Arabic translation. The deleted chapters include information about “The decision-making process in Jordan” (the elite, the different political institutions and the army) and “The principles and practice of Jordanian foreign policy (the Hashemite heritage, the commitment to Arabism and Palestine, the pro-Western stance and the survival policy)”. Apparently, the issues discussed in these two chapters are of a sensitive nature and deemed dangerous to national security. It

²⁰ Interview with Dr Samir Mutawi, 31 December 2000.

could be that Mutawi did not want to mention them in Arabic because the Arabic translation, unlike the English version, would be available to a large number of readers. English readers would be limited to the English-speaking expatriates in the country and residents in the western pockets of Amman. Neither the authorities in Jordan nor Mutawi would wish to make some of the information available to everyone because, as Mutawi said, it “would be misinterpreted, misjudged or misunderstand because of the difference in the ways of analysis and thinking between the English reader and the Arabic reader.”²¹ Mutawi’s statement about misinterpretation or misjudgement seems to be a camouflage for his application of censorship and is, without doubt, not the only reason as the following example will show. On page 2 in the English version, as part of his discussion about “the position of the leader in the Arab world”, Mutawi gives the Hashemite heritage of the Royal Family and the tribal consultative procedures as the reasons for legitimacy:

However, while the Hashemites are accepted as the legitimate rulers within Jordan, these factors have failed to provide them with legitimacy in the region as a whole. This can be attributed to the following factors: neither King Hussein nor King Abdullah [I] attempted to establish an Islamic state whose laws are based on those of Islam; many sections of the society no longer regard blood descent from the Prophet [Muhammad] as an authentic criterion of leadership; many regard tribal patterns of decision-making as obsolete, archaic and irrelevant to the needs of a modern nation-state.

(Mutawi 1987: 2)

This paragraph contradicts the official message in the Jordanian media. It touches upon a very sensitive issue that is not open to public discussion. The idea that “neither King Hussein nor King Abdullah [I] established an Islamic state whose laws are based on those of Islam” is itself enough to attract the attention of the censors,

²¹ My translation of Dr Mutawi’s statement in the interview, 31 December 2000.

who would have taken the necessary measures to have the paragraph deleted, had Mutawi included it in the Arabic translation. It is possible that Mutawi had acted from his experience in the media and decided to delete both chapters from his Arabic translation. It is also possible that he was advised to do so by the publishers, the Royal Hashemite Court, where he worked as the Chief of Press, Research and Studies, or by friends in the Department of Press and Publication. But why did Mutawi apply self-censorship despite his position in Jordan granting him immunity against censorship had he opted not to delete the two chapters?

When I addressed this question to Dr Mutawi, he insisted that he had not received any advice from any one and that he had acted by himself because he saw that there was no need to include information that the Arab (Jordanian) reader already knew. Mutawi's main concern in the Arabic translation was not to affect the historical context by amendments or deletions. He added that he had not taken censorship into account because, had he done so, he would have distorted the historical events and facts.²²

Mutawi made another change to the Arabic translation. He added maps of Palestine, maps showing the military movements in the battles, and pictures of King Hussein at the Army Headquarters and with Arab leaders. Mutawi included other pictures showing Israelis and the results of the war. One of the pictures was different from the others because it showed *a civilian* martyred by the Israelis. Most of the other pictures were of the army or had military connections and two pictures of

²² Interview with Dr Samir Mutawi, 31 December 2000.

Palestinians crossing the River Jordan. The martyr's picture showed defeat and loss of life, which are not usually publicised in wartime. The martyr's picture shocked the reader for two reasons. First, the publications of wartime activities tend to emphasis the elements that boost public morale and ignore any suggestion of defeat. Second, the image in the picture is painful, (Fig. 4.5).



(Fig. 4.5)

The picture illustrates an Arab (a civilian) shot dead in front of one of the gates of the Wall of Jerusalem; behind him is the Mount of Olives; his face is covered. The martyr has one bare foot and his blood is on the stone wall and flows on the ground like a stream. As far as censorship is concerned, the inclusion of pictures, particularly the martyr's picture, is important. The Arabic translation did not include any picture of martyrs from the Armed Forces, although many soldiers were killed in the devastating defeat. Mutawi chose the picture of the civilian martyr "to glorify martyrdom and to, implicitly, remind the Arab reader of the great sacrifice of those martyrs. In addition there was no other picture available or *suitable* for publication"²³

²³ The interview with Dr Samir Mutawi, 31 December 2000.

(note the word suitable). As for glorifying martyrdom, it does not really matter if the martyr is a civilian or a soldier because both sacrifice their lives to defend their land. As for availability, Mutawi could have asked one of his military interviewees (most of them were Commanders-in-Chief of the Armed Forces) to provide him with one or two pictures. He could have easily, with his position in the Royal Court, searched for pictures in the archives of the Royal Court, or the archives of the Jordanian Armed Forces (The Arab Legion). However, the crucial reason for not publishing a picture of a martyr from the Armed Forces is censorship. It is not acceptable to show a dead soldier, for reasons of military or public morale. The soldiers, in the eyes of the people, are always on the winning side. Their job is to make others suffer or die.²⁴ They should always be presented as brave, strong, well-prepared and alert, just as the picture on the cover design would suggest (Fig. 4.6).



(Fig. 4.6)

²⁴ Interview with General Qasem Saleh, August 1999.

Consequently, Mutawi did not publish a picture of a dead soldier because of military censorship (normally applied by the Directorate of Moral Guidance in the Armed Forces). Mutawi himself alluded to censorship in his answer by the word *suitable*: “... no other picture was available or *suitable* for publication”.

Despite the amendments that Mutawi made to his translation, *Jordan in the 1967 War* and its translation were censored in most Arab countries. The ban was lifted gradually by allowing it to be available in some of the universities of these countries. Some Arab newspapers attacked Mutawi and criticised his book. In Jordan the book was praised by King Hussein and King Abdullah II (then prince Abdullah). *Jordan in the 1967 War* was available in Jordan without any restrictions. There could be four reasons for allowing the publication of the Arabic version. (1) The fact that the King himself was one of the interviewees in the book, which could mean that the Royal Court had sponsored the study; (2) the position of the author in Jordan; (3) and most importantly, the changes that Mutawi made to the Arabic translation; and (4) the aim of the book itself, which is one of the few publications to consider the 1967 war from the Jordanian perspective. Mutawi refutes strongly the idea that sponsorship could have had any effect on allowing the sale of the book in Jordan. He states firmly that he alone was responsible for all the expenses of the publication and that he was not sponsored by anybody or any institutions.²⁵ Allowing the publication of the fuller English version was to be expected because it would be read by few and different readers compared with the number who would read the Arabic translation. However,

²⁵ Interview with Dr. Samir Mutawi, 31 December 2000.

Mutawi's book is a very good example of political and military censorship in translation.

2.4 Geoff Gillham's play: *The Moment* and the Arabic translation: *al-Lahza* by the Nur al-Hussein Foundation

2.4.1 The play

The script of Gillham's play is, unfortunately, the only play text that I managed to find while I was doing field research in Jordan in the summer of 1999. Although I was promised many times by some of the Jordanian directors and actors to be given play scripts, all my efforts were in vain owing to cancelled appointments and the unavailability of scripts. Consequently, the chances of finding any play script in the Department of Press and Publication (DPP) were very slim, let alone to find play scripts with the censor's notes and amendments. The only place that offered help was the Nur al-Hussein Foundation. The Foundation is an institution headed by Queen Nur and sponsored by Queen Nur's Office; the government has no control over it. Being sponsored by Queen Nur's Office, it provided a rare opportunity, as far as censorship was concerned, to examine how censors dealt with the plays, as well as the other artistic works, produced by the Foundation. It was important to know the boundaries of its freedom, and whether or not there were set limits or guidelines to censorship for a non-governmental organisation.

The Moment was written for the Nur al-Hussein Foundation by Geoff Gillham and directed by Lina al-Tall Batayneh, who is also the Director of the Foundation. It consists of three scenes and tells the story of a boy and a girl who flee their old city

and head towards a new city. It describes their on-the-run journey and their meeting with an Old Man and a Bare-footed Boy in the middle of their destination. The play includes scenes that are deemed unacceptable in Jordanian society. The problematic areas in the play fall into four categories. (1) The whole idea of a Boy running away with a Girl; (2) the behaviour of the Boy and the Girl in the play; (3) the way the Boy treated the Old Man; and (4) the use of taboo words.

The first problematic area is the main idea of the play. The whole idea of a boy (male) running away with a girl (female) is a two-fold problem highlighting an area of morality, which is unacceptable religiously and culturally. Religiously, no male is supposed to be in the company of an unrelated female unless they are married. The Western idea of girlfriend or boyfriend is not accepted in Jordanian society. Although the girlfriend–boyfriend form of relationship can be seen nowadays between boys and girls in universities, American and English schools and in the west end of Amman, it does not constitute a phenomenon and does not represent the majority of society. Culturally, the idea of running away from one's city or village, especially girls, is uncharacteristic of Jordanian society as well as of most of Arab countries. The boy–girl relationship must therefore be judged as peculiar in a society that was, until recently, described as a clannish society in which the tribal values were firmly established.

The second matter that is problematic is the behaviour of the Boy and the Girl in the play. In all the scenes, the Girl and the Boy hold hands, hug, he puts his arms around her and she puts her arms around his waist. Yet again, it seems that the playwright

wrote his play with the Western audience in mind. Intimate scenes are strictly prohibited on stage in Jordan. It is therefore surprising to see these scenes in the English and the Arabic translation of the play. Whether the director, al-Tall, would follow the script literally or not was something that I did not know, because the play was still being considered by al-Tall and the Foundation administration. However, judging from the notes made by the Director on the Arabic and English versions of the play, it seems that the Director did not intend to change anything in the play. Most of the amendments are linguistic, where al-Tall changed the classical words into colloquial Jordanian. Strangely, though, in one paragraph on page 18 (pages 16–17 in the English script) the translator or the Director decided to delete the hugging scene between the Bare-footed Boy and the Girl by using a corrector. The deletion made to the paragraph on page 18 is confusing because many other scenes of hugging and holding hands on earlier pages had been left without deletion.

She [Girl] puts her arms around his waist and hugs unto him [Boy]. He puts his arms around her, and gently hugs her closing his eyes. They stand motionless for a little while. He opens his eyes and the Girl moves from his embrace and takes his hand
(Gillham 1999: 2)

(See Appendix 3.1)

...The Girl goes over to him. Holds him ... the Girl takes his hand and they exit towards the droughtlands.

(Gillham 1999: 9)

(See Appendix 3.2)

She becomes a little tearful. He holds her close again ... he hugs her to him. She hugs into him ... They remain still for few moments. He hugs her closer. After a moment, she draws her head up to look at him. He's not looking at her. She takes his cheek in her hand and turns his head to her.

(Gillham 1999: 11)

(See Appendix 3.3)

The Girl walks over to the Bare-footed Boy. She stands in front of him, reaches out her arm and touches him lightly just beneath his eyes with her fingers. The Bare-footed Boy is looking at her but makes no reaction. The Boy turns and looks at the

other two. The Girl takes a step forward and taking the Bare-footed Boy's head gently in her hands *and hugs him*. The Bare-footed boy responds, hugging her and lightly putting his hands on her sides.

(Gillham 1999: 16–17)

(See Appendix 3.4)

The last sentence in the English paragraph was not translated into Arabic. It was deleted using a corrector.

The third matter that is problematic in *The Moment* is the way the Boy treated the Old Man. When the boy decides to leave the Old Man and go to the city, the Old Man refuses to give him the general directions to the city. Then the Boy and the Old Man started to quarrel:

The Boy pushes the Old Man away and sharply tugs the stick from him as he does, and throws it away. The Old Man has a seizure at the same moment, totters back and collapses amongst the food

(Gillham 1999: 8)

(See Appendix 3.5)

The Boy: We didn't kill him. Went beserk – had a heart attack. We didn't do anything. *Crazy – worse than my father*. Went beserk.

(Gillham 1999: 11)

(See Appendix 3.6 for the Arabic text)

The reference to the Boy's father as being, "Crazy – worse than my father", is also unacceptable culturally and religiously in Jordanian society. It is very strange that it was not censored because it is offensive. Jordanian society reserves a very high status for parents. It is unusual for any censor to pass Gillham's script or the Arabic translation without taking censorial decision.

The fourth problematic area in the play is the use of taboo words. These words are not expected to appear in any play text whether in English or Arabic without being

censored. The censorial decisions on films, TV series and play scripts are the same. Dirty words are strictly censored. In films and TV series, for example, the methods that are followed to censor taboo words are by dubbing and by not translating them in the subtitles. In the theatre, taboo words are deleted from the play scripts. Actors are not allowed to utter any taboo or offensive words on stage. If they do so, action is expected to be taken by the Department of Press and Publications. Most importantly, the audience will also censor the play by not attending the performances. In the play many dirty words are used by Gillham and are translated by the Foundation without censorship:

The Old Man hits the Boy with extraordinary force a glancing blow with his stick.
The Girl: Look out!
The Boy: *Shit*.

(Gillham 1999: 7)

(See Appendix 3.7 for the Arabic text)

The word “shit” is translated into Arabic as *tabban*. The word *tabban* is the translation of ‘damn it’. The translator opted for a less offensive word because the conventions of writing in Arabic do not allow the literal translation of shit.

On one occasion the translator of *The Moment* added two offensive words: “*al-fājira al-qadhira*” on page 8 (also page 8 in the English script) that are not mentioned in the original script. This incident is against all the odds. What is expected from the translator in a given culture is to follow the norms of that culture. However, the translator in this incident not only violated the rules of censorship but also breached the cultural norms by adding strong offensive Arabic words: *al-fājira al-qadhira*:

The Old Man: You filth. I could have taught you – something – ...
Together. What we could've done. But no – Found ourselves again – listen to *her*
instead.

(Gillham 1999: 8)

(See Appendix 3.8)

The Arabic translator replaced the word “her” in the English script with the words *al-fājira al-qadhira*.

The translator seems undecided as to whether the dirty and offensive words should be kept or deleted. On page 18-19 (page 17 in the English script), the translator renders the words “bitch” and “whore” into *tāfiha* (daft, or literally, worthless):

The Boy: I'll kill you! (Running at them) Get out of here you *bitch, whore...*

(Gillham 1999: 17)

(See Appendix 3.9)

On the same pages and in the same paragraph, the translator deletes the word “bitch”, which is repeated three times by the Boy just in the following sentence:

The Girl and the Bare-footed Boy run away as fast as they can, and exit.
([The Boy] continuing) – I'll kill you both! (Picking up a handful of stones and dust and hurling it after them.) *Bitch! Bitch! Bitch!...*

(Gillham 1999: 17)

(See Appendix 3.10)

Then, on page 19 (page 18 in the English script) the translator renders the words “whore” and “bitch” into *fājira* and *ahira* respectively:

Old Man: (evenly) come to the Old City. She was *a whore* from the start. Carry me on your back – I know the way...

The Boy: (to himself) *Bitch!*

(Gillham 1999: 18)

(See Appendix 3.11)

2.4.2 Conclusion

The Moment is taken here as an example of censorship of translated drama. Nevertheless, the play does not represent in any way the procedures that the censors follow in Jordanian society. The deletions, additions and amendments made by the translator did not follow any particular pattern. The translator seemed inconsistent in many instances over what to leave out and what to keep in the translated script. He even added some offensive words, which are not in the original script. Strangely enough, although the play is replete with strong offensive words unrealistic ideas and unacceptable scenes, neither the English nor the Arabic script was censored by the translator, who is usually the first censor, or the official censors. This particular case study of censorship in translation poses many questions concerning censorial decisions in Jordan. Clearly, the theme of Gillham's play is not suitable for Arab culture. His main idea on which the play is based does not work in a country like Jordan. Therefore, the play is not expected to be chosen for translation from the start. Even if it were chosen for translation, it would be expected to undergo major surgery to make it suitable for the Jordanian audience. The only explanation that could be given for the relaxed censorship of the play is because it was written for the Nur al-Hussein Foundation. In other words, being an institution sponsored by Queen Nur's Office means that the works produced for and by the Foundation are not subject to the strict control of the official censors. The fact that the Foundation is headed by Queen Nur gives immunity to the works produced for and by the Foundation. Therefore, it is left to the people in the Foundation to decide the *limit* of freedom.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The object of this study is to trace the influence of censorship on translation. Achieving this goal, however, is not an easy task. The present research was hindered by the intricacy of censorship, the unwillingness of people to discuss the subject and the shortage of studies of censorship in general and censorship of translations in particular. The present research has tried to give an overview of the definition of censorship by tracing the history of censorship back to the time of the ancient Greeks. It has tried to refute the arguments of those who are reluctant to admit the existence of censorship and those who believe that it is exclusively a modern issue, and to identify the censors, to know the reasons for applying censorship, and the impact that censorship has on people.

The discussion in this thesis has revealed the following points:

1. Censorship has been practised since people began to express themselves in any written or verbal form (public speeches and sermons). The works of the great intellectuals, such as Socrates and Galileo, were censored.
2. Books and parts of books were burnt or banned, such as King James' version of the Bible.
3. Writers and translators were killed, tortured or banished because of censorship.
4. Over the years, the effects of censorship have been strongly felt in diverse cultures and societies, regardless of whether are democratic or not.

5. The interplay between the different forces in each society, such as politics, religion and morals, as well as the fickle nature of censorship has helped in its survival.
6. Despite the huge changes that have taken place in all spheres of life and the vast and rapid changes in the mass media, censorship remains as controversial today as it was at the time of the early Athenians, and there is nothing to suggest that censorship will be less of an issue in the future.
7. Even when concepts, such as freedom of speech, human rights, or democracy were introduced into the life of any society, the only result of these concepts “has been to make the business of censorship vastly more ingenious” (O’Higgins 1972: 14).
8. The rationale behind censorship has remained constant: to protect the morality of society, religion and, in particular, the existing political structure. The main aim of censorship is to fulfil the political agenda of the existing regime but it is also clear that the opponents of censors and censorship have never stopped calling for a censorship-free society.

In Jordan the situation is no different from any other society in the world. Perhaps the laws of censorship in Jordan are very intricate because many topics are interrelated such as politics, religion, traditions, democracy, liberalisation, modernisation, press codes, publication laws, and the impact of the regional and international changes in the country. The argument about censorship is contradictory. Those who claim that Jordan is a censorship-free country are in fact censoring themselves. People of high status use euphemisms or look for linguistic loopholes,

although, being part of the elite, they are unlikely to be harmed or to divulge official secrets. The 'tendency to camouflage' clearly shows the subtlest form of censorship. Jordan has had to fashion its censorial decisions with an eye to both external and internal factors, which are very complex in a small country with meagre resources. The main decisive criterion in applying or easing censorship in the political arena is prohibiting criticism of the monarchy, protecting national security and ensuring the stability of the country. In the social and cultural arena, religion and social norms are the decisive criteria. In theatre the Jordanian government has eased censorship on theatrical performances over the years. Theatre pushed the margins of freedom wider, especially after the reinstatement of democracy in 1989.

In literature and the translated literature, the conventions of Arabic writing play the decisive role in allowing or banning a certain work. The content of literary works could give rise to accusations of violating the moral values of society and even of blasphemy. An example of the interplay between religion, politics and morality is the censoring of Mahfuz's *Awlad Haritna*. Censors tend to believe that they probably have the obligation to protect the morals of society and the state alike and for the same reason. They may feel that they have the right to see censorial decisions applied out of concern for the people's own good or for public morality and the preservation of the political order.

However, there will always be exceptions. Some VIP's or foundations sponsored by them in any society are not subject to the strict control of the official censors. Therefore, it is left to these people and their foundation(s) to decide the *limit* of

freedom and the ceiling of censorship. An examples of the influence of VIP's or foundations sponsored by them is Haikal's influence to publish *Awlad Haritna* in *al-Ahram* newspaper in spite of all the opposition and criticism of the novel (case study number 1 in chapter 4). Another example is Geoff Gillham's *The Moment* and its Arabic translation, *al-Lahza* by the Queen Nur Foundation (case study number 4 in chapter 4).

The mushrooming of social institutions (Civil Society) along with the old and the newly formed liberal movements around the world and in the Arab world in particular makes the argument to ease or even abolish censorship much stronger. This argument is supported by the vast and rapid changes in the mass media which have brought the world together with the press of a button. However, what has been clear until now is that governments are not willing to abolish censorship completely. It is true that at a certain stage governments ease the laws of censorship now and then. It is true also that the same governments could defy the condemnation by many people inside or outside their country and bring back from the shelves the old forms of censorship. Governments may crush demonstrations, banish writers, blacklist actors and directors, ban films, close down theatres, burn books/translations, and assassinate, when they feel that is necessary. There will always be excuses and justifications for such actions: perhaps those preferred are the concern for national security and the people's morality.

The present study is an attempt to study censorship and translation. However, there are other aspects that deserve to be investigated, such as the influence of sponsorship

on the selection of works for translation, the influence of the education and background of the censors in applying censorial decisions, the influence of economics in applying censorship, the changes in personnel in the political or cultural order, and the influence of censorship on the loyalty and authenticity of the translators. In Jordan, the influence of the peace treaty and the government's normalisation policies on censorial decisions could be another useful area of investigation. The importance of these studies is that they could be, at one stage, the reflection of the socio-political history of one society and therefore paint a picture of the changes in the people's attitude over time.

Censorship has changed dramatically over the years, fluctuating from rigid and severe laws to paradoxical, ambiguous and relaxed guidance. The dilemma that will face all those concerned with censorship is frequently scrutinised in three areas: politics, religion and morality. The order is reshuffled differently in each society. Whether in the East or West; in new democracies or old, the importance of these three areas will remain, as they have done since the time of the ancient Greeks, the major player in people's lives. The difference is the level of strictness or laxity applied according to the laws of political, religious and moral censorship. In other words, censorship has been practised, is practised and will be practised; the change is in the many faces worn by the censors and in the new terminology in which the forms of censorship are dressed.

Finally, do we need to have a completely censorship-free society? Is that possible? In the Arab world, more precisely in Jordan, it is unlikely now and in the future. As

long as there are people living in a certain community, there will be a need for some means of communication. As long as this need for communication exists, so also exists the need to organise this kind of relationship between the members of the community. The margins, however, of do's and don'ts could be pushed further some of the time, but not all the time.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

- 1-1 كان مكان حارتنا خلاء. فهو امتداد لصحراء المقطم الذي يربض في الأفق. ولم يكن بالخلاء من قائم إلا البيت الكبير الذي شيده الجبلوي كأنما ليتحدى به الخوف والوحشة وقطاع الطريق. كان سوره الكبير العالي يتحلق مساحة واسعة، نصفها الغربي حديقة، والشرقي مسكن مكون من أدوار ثلاثة.
- 2-1 ... لقد نال هذه الأرض هبة بلا عناء ثم طغى واستكبر.
- 3-1 ... فصاح: "علم ذلك عند الطاغية المتواري خلف أسوار بيته..."
- 4-1 فسأله فوانيس: ألم تكن مسطولا؟ فصاح جبل بغضب: إن السطل لم يذهب بعقلي قط!
- 5-1 وتحدث آل حمدان عن وقفة جبل عاريا في الحوش، وعن لغته السرية التي خاطب بها الثعبان حتى جاءه طائعا.
- 6-1 وتجرد من ثيابه فانقلب كيوم التقطه الهائم من الحفرة المترعة بمياه الأمطار.
- 7-1 أما بقية الحارة وهي الناحية المنحدرة للجمالية فكانت مقام من لا صفة لهم ولا نسب، أو الجرابيع، كما كان يدعونهم،...
- 8-1 ثم ضحك العجوز واستدرك قائلا: وأنت شاب مولع بالنساء، ترصد عند المغيب فتيات الخلاء! فابتسم قاسم متسائلا: وهل في ذلك من عيب يا معلمي؟
- 9-1 مالك يا ولد متأنقا كالبنث؟
- 10-1 وازداد قاسم اضطرابا ففطن صادق إلى حاله كشأنه دائما فقدم إليه قدحا جديدا من الشراب، وما زال به حتى أفرغه في جوفه حتى الثمالة، وكانت الجوزة ما تزال في يده.
- 11-1 وتحرت عنه فعلمت أنه طفل يتيم ترعاه ببيعة دجاج.
- 12-1 وضعت المرأة البقجة على الأرض وجلست عليها مفرجة ما بين فخذيها لتريح بطنها المنداحة،...
- 13-1 وعادت إلى الصغيرة التي عاودت البكاء فألقتها ثديها.
- 14-1 وبكت إحسان فجأة، فألقتها ثديها في عجلة، ثم نظرت إليه مستطلعة في قلق...
- 15-1 كم من سيدة مصونة تحولت بكلمة إلى متسولة تعيسة. وكم من رجل غادره بعد خدمة طويلة مترنحا يحمل على ظهره العاري آثار سياط حملت أطرافها بالرصاص والدم يطفح من فيه وأنفه.
- 16-1 وتضاعف غضبه... فراح يقول بتأثر وانفعال: "لماذا كان غضبك كالنار تحرق بلا رحمة؟ لماذا كانت كبرياءك أحب إليك من لحمك ودمك؟ وكيف تنعم بالحياة الرغيدة وأنت تعلم أننا نداس بالأقدام كالحشرات؟ والعفو واللين والتسامح ما شأنها في بيتك الكبير أيها الجبار!".
- 17-1 فتساءل رفاعة: هل يرضيكم أن أتزوج منها؟
- 18-1 وشهدت الأيام التالية للزواج حركة دائبة في حياة رفاعة.
- 19-1 وساد صمت لم تسمع خلاله إلا حشرجة.
- 20-1 وتعاونوا على استخلاص الجثة من الرمال وقاموا بها في رفق... وخلع حسين جلبابه فغطى بها الجثة ثم حملوها، وساروا نحو باب النصر.

Appendix 2

- 1-2 TTA & TTB : يقدم هذا التقرير معلومات جوهرية وموثوق بها بأن الرئيس كلينتون أعاق سير العدالة جنائيا، أولا في قضية تحرش جنسي كان هو المتهم فيها ثم في تحقيق المحلفين حول علاقته الجنسية بمونيكا لونيسكي...
- 2-2 TTA & TTB : ويتضمن الجزء الأول رؤية عامة للهدف الحقيقي وراء عملية التغطية التي قام بها الرئيس والعلاقة الجنسية بينه وبين مس لونيسكي.
- 3-2 TTA & TTB : أما الأجزاء التالية فتتناول تقييم العلاقة وفقا للترتيب الزمني بما في ذلك الاتصالات الجنسية وجهود الرئيس للحصول على عمل لمس لونيسكي.
- 4-2 TTA & TTB : في 28 يوليو 1998... سلمت مس لونيسكي فستان أزرق موديل "زي البحرية" قالت أنها كانت ترتديه خلال لقاء جنسي مع الرئيس يوم 28 فبراير 1997.
- 5-2 TTA : أصر الرئيس على أنه لا يمكن أن توجد علاقة جنسية دون حدوث جماع بغض النظر عن وجود أية ممارسة جنسية أخرى.
- TTB : أصر الرئيس على استحالة أن تكون هناك علاقة جنسية دون نكاح أو ممارسة جنسية كاملة!
- 6-2 TTA : ... بهدف إثارته وزيادة رغبته الجنسية...
- 7-2 TTA : ... فإن الشخص يقيم علاقة جنسية إذا ما قام عن عمد أو تسبب في الاتصال بالأعضاء التناسلية أو الشرج أو ثنية الفخذ أو الثدي أو الجانب الداخلي للفخذ أو أرداف شخص آخر.
- TTB : ... فإن أي شخص يرتبط بعلاقة جنسية حينما يشارك بوعي في الاتصال بالأعضاء التناسلية أو الشرج أو الأرداف أو المفاخذة أو التقاء الأعضاء التناسلية دون إيلاج...
- 8-2 TTA : وفي كل هذه المرات [التسعة] قام الرئيس بملامسة صدرها العاري وقبله.
- TTB : وإنهما تبادلوا القبلات... وتحسس الرئيس صدر مونيكا بيديه وفمه.
- 9-2 TTA : وفي إطار ما وصفته بالغزل الساخن قامت مونيكا بالكشف عن ظهرها ليرى الرئيس مشد الجورب الذي يلتف حول خاصرتها.
- TTB :
- 10-2 TTA : وفي تلك المرة كان الرئيس نظره عليها بقوة وقبل صدرها العاري وداعب أعضائها ثم أدخل فيها سيجارا ثم وضع السيجار في فمه وقال لها: " مذاقه حلو".
- TTB : تقول مونيكا: إن الرئيس قام بوضع السيجار في مكان حساس في جسدها ثم أعاد وضعه في فمه قائلا: إنه لذيذ الطعم!!

Appendix 3

- 1-3 الفتاة: لا (تضع ذراعيها حول خصره وترمي بصدرها إلى حضنه. يضع ذراعيه حولها ويعانقها مغمضا عينيه يقفان بلا حراك لفترة وجيزة يفتح عينيه. تتخلص من وضع العناق وتمسك بيده).
- 2-3 ... (الفتاة تذهب إليه. تحضنه تأخذ يده ويخرجان باتجاه الأراضي القاحلة.)
- 3-3 ... (إغروقت عيناها قليلا. يضمها قريبا مرة أخرى... يقفان بلا حراك للحظات. يحضنها أقرب. بعض لحظة ترفع رأسها للنظر إليه. إنه لا ينظر إليها. تمسك وجنته بيديها وتدير رأسه إليها).
- 4-3 (الفتاة تمشي إلى الحافي. تقف أمامه، تمد ذراعها وتلمسه بخفة بأصابعها تحت عينيه... يلتفت وينظر إليهما. الفتاة تتقدم خطوة للأمام آخذة رأس الحافي برفق بيديها...).
- 5-3 (الفتى يدفع بالعجوز بعيدا ويسحب العصا بحدة أثناء ذلك ويلقي بها بعيدا. العجوز يعاني من أزمة صدرية في نفس اللحظة، يتداعى إلى الخلف وينهار وسط الطعام).
- 6-3 الفتاة: لم أقتله. لقد سعر - أصيب بنوبة قلبية. لم نعمل شيئا مجنون - أسوأ من والدي - لقد سعر.
- 7-3 (العجوز يضرب الفتى بقوة استثنائية بعصاه ضربة طائشة تتحرف عنه ولا تصيبه).
- الفتاة: انتبه!
- الفتى: تبا!
- 8-3 العجوز: يا قدر. كان بإمكانني أن أعلمك - شيئا - ... معا كان بوسعنا أن نعمل. لكن لا - وجدنا أنفسنا من جديد - اصغ لتلك الفاجرة القذرة بدلا من ذلك.
- 9-3 الفتى: ... سأقتلك (راكضا إليهما) أخرجني من هنا يا تافهة.
- 10-3 (تهرب الفتاة والحافي بأسرع ما يمكن ويخرجان). [الفتى] (متابعا) سأقتلكما (يملا حفنة من الحصى والغبار ويرشقهما وراءهما...).
- 11-3 العجوز: (بانظام) عد إلى المدينة القديمة. لقد كانت فاجرة منذ البداية. احملني على ظهرك - أنا أعرف الطريق...
الفتى: (لنفسه) عاهرة.