The "Syrian Alternative Media" Independence Amid the Political Dependence

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Introduction:

The intensity of societal divisiveness increases, and it becomes the public is the weakest link in the political game in the experiences of wars and conflicts; this process is like hypnosis. In which the convictions of a large segment of society changes, and attitudes and behaviors are being crystallized based on the agendas of those in charge of public communication. Where the state of political transition and chaos is used to turn the public opinion into private property, and mislead it by injecting it with a dose of interrelated and oriented political, social and religious concepts, which often has an impact on its intellectual structure, affiliations, tendencies and ideas.

Therefore, the owners of these outlets will not find better than the exploitation of news outlets and its related tools, such as the most appropriate (emerging) soft war tools in terms of impact and acceptance, in order to achieve current goals or strategic goals with (political, cultural and religious) dimensions .

After 10 years of the Syrian war, we can see what was previously presented. However, many alternative Syrian media outlets its media identity was absent and the function of belonging to the society demands, its media sovereignty was stripped from an independence, and loyalty was limited to the official sponsor and sponsor of the television, radio, agency, and newspaper.

And from here; These emerging means did not translate the generosity of money offered to them from all sides into a professional media heritage that serves the demands of the Syrian street, and they were unable to take clear steps towards achieving justice and transparency, and social and moral responsibility. On the contrary, many of them have slipped into the abyss of dependence and political rivalry, and turned, with its cross-cutting media tools, into a cyberspace that attracts political tensions, which paves the way to an unpredictable reality, in which the identity affiliations, thought and belief are being fragmented.

The frameworks of the study

The study will be divided into four main frameworks.

Firstly: The Methodological Framework consists of (methodological procedures and the concepts of the study).

Secondly: The Theoretical Framework is divided into three main axes: impact media theories, media independence, and the experience of the Syrian Alternative media.

Thirdly: Analytical Framework, which includes analysis and interpretation of two main aspects, namely: (the news map, which includes. The geographical distribution of alternative media and the identity of the alternative media and the independence of the alternative media in light of the political dependency, media framing and stereotyping of identity), (2- Political dependency and

its essence: political dependency and the features of political dependency in the Syrian Alternative Media

Fourthly: The results and recommendations framework; includes the recommendations and the results obtained, together with the documentation of the references, and the presentation of the annexes).

Firstly: The Methodological Framework

The problem of the study

The study investigates the problem of the multiplicity and diversity of the Syrian alternative media's allegiances in light of the raging of the political conflict, and the reflection of this conflict on the media environment. Alongside putting the light spot on the reverberations of this problem, which often lead to the launching of values, ideas and beliefs that undermine the professional controls that must be characterized by the media.

The problem of the study is crystallized in answering a major question: What are the features of Syrian alternative media and its news and geographical map in light of the Syrian war, and was it able to align between commitment to professional rules (independence) and the sharpness of Political tensions for those parties they support?

The importance of the study

The importance of the study stems from the importance of the subject itself, the variables that were addressed, and the escalation of political tensions between the Syrian conflict parties. The study presents a map of the spread of Syrian alternative media, and clarifies their editorial policies, in addition to the disclosure of its background, political dimensions, sources of support, and financial funding, which often clash with media honor codes, and profession standards, in addition to the danger of societal division in light of the multiple goals and objectives. The importance of the study is evident from a semantic perspective based on the importance of ensuring media independence to ensure sound democracy, and assisting researchers and those interested in preparing similar issues and studies.

The goals of the study

The study aims at achieving the following:

1- Demonstrating the political dependence of the alternative media in light of the multiplicity of category-based trends, and the diversity of political loyalties, with introducing of political tensions on the identity of the media outlets.

2- Explaining the risk of financing and logistical support, and the location of the broadcast (conditional and politicized), over the responsibilities of Syrian alternative media, and on its editorial track, while trying to provide solutions and recommendations to solve this dilemma.

3- Clarifying the extent to which the alternative Syrian media enjoys media independence, and moral responsibility, in light of political subordination, with analysis the ways and the methods used by these outlets to mislead and mobilize public opinion.

4 Providing recommendations and solutions that contribute in creating an objective ground for Syrian media that is characterized by decency and social responsibility.

Study's Methodology and society

The present study belongs to the analytical descriptive studies known as; an accurate and detailed description of a specific phenomenon or topic, and it aims at accurate knowledge of the elements of the research phenomenon, at it is useful in achieving a better understanding or the possibility of developing its own future policies or procedures. "

It was also relied on the media survey method (Media outlets Survey), due to the difficulty in conducting a field survey for the public due to the Corona pandemic, and this approach "allows the media to be identified from different aspects.", taking into account the pages, personal blogs or platforms, and the papers speaking on behalf of the civil, political, and military administrations) and its equivalent), excluded from the media survey process.

As for the study community, it includes (alternative Syrian media) in various patterns, features and tendencies, and the areas of its

presence inside and outside the Syrian territories, and with regard to the research sample, a random sample was studied from a number of alternative Syrian media outlets to complete the requirements of the study.

On the other hand, the temporal boundaries of the study extend from the beginning of the Syrian war until January 2021, while the spatial borders include the Syrian alternative media in the regions of the Syrian opposition and the (AANES), and outside the Syrian territories).

Study variables:

The study will focus on several basic variables that cross-cutting with each other in terms of functional and structural role.

The independent variable: the political dependency

The dependent variable: the independence of "the Alternative Media Outlets"

Data collection tools and sources

1- The intended interview and personal observation tools were used; for several perspectives, the most important of which are: Research content enrichment with testimonies by academics and professional journalists who have kept up with the Syrian war, and have had research media products in this framework, in addition to focusing on the importance of close observation and monitoring, under certain environmental conditions and factors to be described and analyzed.

2- The information was gathered from primary and secondary library sources that included (books and research papers, opinion articles, publications, and news media sites).

Key concepts

The political dependence

One of the most important forms of dependency, and the most common one, it is practiced as a political method that is based on the adoption by the individual, group, or states for political

tendencies that follow the parties or other institutions or states that influence, in one way or another, the degree of their independence and their will to make decisions and adopt positions.

The Alternative Syrian Media

Media with multiple allegiances, and political trends, originated with the beginning the war in Syria, as an alternative to traditional Syrian media, has distinguished some of it by conveying the Syrians' reality during the war with transparency, accuracy, and objectivity.

The independence

It means the ability to perform duties and functions without restrictions or the imposition of principles, negative control, and the obligation to stand on a balanced line towards incidents, and it is one of the most important factors that allow job practices to achieve success and production sustainability .

Media professionalism

A set of parameters and principles that journalists must adhere to while performing their media work, to achieve a high degree of integrity, professionalism, with maximum rates of observance of the rules of ethics, literature and transparency.

Secondly: the theoretical framework

Targeted media is at the forefront of the tools of political hegemony, intellectual domination to mobilize people, creating conflicts and systematized divisions into the structure of societies. It is not as some people think, that the media is just a modern tributary. It is role is reduced to the limits of modern technology for informing and entertaining the public.

In this part, there's a central question asked by the French scholar John Marc. Jenny, what do we want from the media, do we want a first - stage profit productivity, or do we want a cultural priority, which in its second phase its mission would be serving a political and economic influence?

Indeed, this is what a mass communication does by changing or instilling of political values and beliefs, developing of knowledge and psychology components within the recipient personality, by following the focus learning strategy (Focus). In which the focus would be on some carefully selected information, to create as much influence as possible and to move the crowds, and direct them to achieve the goals of those in charge of communications. Subsequently, achieving a culture of passage based on the flooding over the public. With directed (politicized) information (contrary to cognitive depth).

Firstly: theories of media influence

There are many theories of media influence through which profiles can be analyzed and the interpretation of political dependency's features in Syria's alternative media, spearheaded by theories (the Spiral of Silence, agenda Setting Priorities, Gatekeeper, cultural cultivation). However, the most absorbing theory, aware of the axes of our study, are the both the Spiral of Silence and Agenda setting theories.

1) The Spiral of Silence Theory

One of the most important theories that address the political elites' impact on the public opinion by hiring media platforms in favor of its agendas.

The "Theory of Spiral of Silence", which was laid by The German scientist Elizabeth Noel Neumann-Noelle, in 1974, is considered one of the preliminary media theories, and it is the most significant and accurate to explain the behavior of the masses towards societal events. "The theory of the spiral of silence" implies, at first, a strong correlation between two fundamental variables are; the media, and what content it broadcasts and its orientation, and masses and their tendencies and beliefs, it is a dynamic process in which psychological, social, cultural and political factors intervene.

For the media to succeed in applying the "Spiral of Silence theory," forming the public opinion according to what it wants, it should have a specific mechanism that includes three basic matter that are:

Accumulative: a repetition of presentation of the content to the audience, in which the cumulative presentation is performed leads to impact on public opinion and forming it.

Inclusiveness: The media often offers the public what they're looking for, which makes it a road that you pass through it every day, so the public exposure to the media is considered realistic.

Homogeneity: It means that the message is consistent with those in charge of the communication process and the institutions to which the receiving future public belong to it. Therefore, the different messages in the presentation appears similar in objective that consolidates its formation for the public opinion.

Subsequently, the idea of theory is concluded in the fact that the individual is influenced by the public opinion and collective communication to shape his/her tendencies and convictions towards any issue, and this tendency is often compatible with ideas presented by the media.

2) The "Agenda-Setting Theory"

Agenda placement research goes back to "Walter Lippmann" through his book " The Public Opinion", Lippmann sees that the media outlets help to build the mental image for the public, these means often offer a false environment in the public minds.

This theory is related to the "gatekeeper" theory, where the latter is concerned with the selection of news, while the theory of agenda examines the situation of how this news is presented to the public and in this deliberate presented sequence, the underlying factor in determining. The importance is the prominence, and in its various forms, the prominence is subjected to the humanity dimension and the conflict process.

In response to this theory's role in creating public opinion consistent with politics. The Iraqi journalist, Ayman Khalid finds hegemony and taking control lies in information, and the means to produce speech bound to an agenda of those who manage minds,

direct public opinion and seek to protect the political class's interests, and those living on the margins of the empires of dictatorship.

Influence elements also take their reach beyond the internal agenda, by efforts to control the intellectual structure of those implementing the media agenda. In addition, bringing it to the stage of absolute conviction by the speech of the institution that organizes them, without looking at the basic idea of the function of information, and its Humanitarian objectives Social therapies.

Thus, we can say, the thrust of the theory lies in the media's focus on attracting public attention toward topics that may be marginal and secondary altogether at the expense of other issues, of interest to the recipient that are being excluded or marginalized from the media editorial circle, based on the agendas of the outlet, and those in charge of it.

Secondly: the media independence

Independence is a professional working rule for media practice, and it constitutes independence and pluralism in the media, at the level of public opinion and opinions, including criticizing people in power, the guarantees of healthy democracy. Subsequently, monitoring and securing the plurality of ownership is the first step towards an option of Independent and free.

The media independence forms

There are many images of independence in the field of media, and it looks like an interrelated sequence in terms of the functional and structural treatment of editorial content, these forms are spearheaded:

First: financial Independence: it means transparency in the media institution financial plans, spending and financing sources.

Second: editorial independence: in which the media institution carries out its work without political pressure, restrictions or monopoly on the part of the owners, with the necessity of granting editors the freedom to make decisions, and positions that should respect the career code of honor and ethical disciplines.

These two figures reflect the extent of the ability of the media and journalists to adhere to the moral and humanitarian principles, standing neutral, and at the same distance from events, and taking human alone as the center of events in their media address, without being biased to religion, color, language, or political opinion.

In order to gain and support the public's confidence with the media institutions, it must adhere to the independence of media addressing in isolation from any external influences, and distancing themselves from the tensions and conflicts whatever they might be their nature.

From here, we find most of the media institutions and academies (enjoying independence) adopts fairness, balance and its editorial polices, and it is considered as pillars in presenting information accurately, without adding an opinion to it or flipping its parts. It must also be emphasized that independence is relative, and it is difficult to take the description of "Absolute independence" even in the democratic-based media outlets atmospheres, which is characterized by laws of justice, freedom of opinion and expression, in the end media are not charitable societies. Rather, each one has agendas and political interests.

Thirdly: the experience of the Syrian Alternative Media from the official Media

Preface

Syria has known during the last five decades, a media system that can be classified as one of the most closed authoritarian media systems, and disconnected from professional standards in the world, as it is at the bottom of the global ranking for freedom of the press, and the practice of the media career. The Syrian government has almost absolute control over all official and private media outlets (audio, written and visual), and it has been using these means to serve its internal and external tendencies and policies, moving away from performing of the media function in terms of integrity, realistic, and fair.

However, this traditional view of the media has changed with the multiplicity of sources of reporting events and the development of

the media map of coverage of events in the course of the war in the country. Which in turn resulted in breaking the restrictions of monopolizing the traditional media by the political power, and the emergence of the Syrian recipient as a key element in the time of digital media in the communication process (the citizen journalist). This eliminated the censorship of the State's apparatus, creating events, sharing their details, and showing positions towards them, more precisely, the traditional view of the audience ended being a passive recipient of the media message, to become more understandable and being aware of the (politics, economics, law and freedoms) fields.

1) The Evolution of the Syrian Alternative Media

The aforementioned indicators paved the way for the evolution of individual and collective media initiatives, supporting the process of change and democracy in the country, under the name of "Syrian Alternative Media". It arose like other countries of the "Arab Spring" from the very essence of the protests movement, and played its role as an alternative media system to the monolithic closed official Syrian media.

In its early beginnings, the Syrian Alternative Media carried "revolutionary and patriotic agendas" and addressed, to a reasonable extent, the minds and emotions of Syrians of all political backgrounds, and religious and ethnic identities. It was able to walk on a balanced line, reflecting the developments of the Syrian life, and focusing its attention on in the first place in improving the level and quality of media content, and strive to provide a new coverage that reflects political and civic demands of the Syrian protesters.

In this sense, and amid an atmosphere of political and military complications, lack of experience, and lack of funding. The Syrian Alternative media, with the help of dozens of media outlets, surpassed 600 media outlets and an army of activists, amateurs and academics, has been able to establish trustworthy media pillars. Restructuring the media field, away from the censorship of the government security apparatus, from the control of the partisan forces, and from shares of political rallies as today. In which it invested "the space of freedom", and geographical spots that got out of control the Syrian army and it invested the absence of publishing restrictions to break the stereotypical ideological

media discourse. It formed a general media pattern among the Syrian public at home and abroad of the country by the efficiency of some workers and contact with western experiences. It folded the traditional media of the state, and it has become self-centered.

2) The alteration of the Syrian Alternative Media's course

Over time, the political and military equation changed, and accelerated transformations emerged in the map of control and hegemony. As a result, many alternative media outlets were unable to maintain a balanced pattern of independence, the transparency, and decency of the media while keeping pace with the momentum of the war in the country. As it was absent from its political trends, the main point of highlighting "popular demands" and "revolutionary goals", And transformed, by virtue of many reasons and factors, to an advertising tool whose editorial line reflects the goals of the funder. It expresses party ideological currents, due to (political, sectarian and financial) factors, the interests of states and regional powers, that harnessed the ideology of voice and image, to fly biasedly in the unlimited horizon, infiltrating the media sovereignty, and ignoring the intellectual, national, and ideological affiliations of peoples and societies.

The mechanism for attracting the public has also been stripped of rationality and wisdom, by implanting directed messages for this party or the other, and passing extraneous terms to the societal environment, that is compatible organically with political and sectarian loyalties, and nationalist supportive of the nascent form of the Syrian media.

Whereas, on a career level, its news display missed professional prospects to consolidate an inclusive media vision for the Syrians, which is consistent with the patriotic public line, away from the political, ethnic and sectarian alignments and the narrow partisanship blocs.

Based on that, the Syrian conflict, in its ten years, is the closest possible model it conduct a study on the independence of emerging media outlets, and devising political backgrounds, in light of the multiplicity of political loyalties, and the domination of support and supply agencies financial editorial decisions.

Thirdly: the analytical framework

**The analysis of the news map**

In this axis, the spotlight will be put on the map of news coverage in the Syrian alternative media, with an analysis and interpretation of the factors affecting its editorial line, in light of the political dependency, and the rules of professionalism that media institutions must adhere to in order to achieve their independence.

Firstly: A map of the geographical distribution of the alternative Syrian media

| Geographic distribution of the Media outlet	the number of the Media outlets	the percentage out of 100%
The Syrian Opposition" areas of control	10	10.10%
The Autonomous Administration of North and East of Syria	51	51.51%
Abroad	38	38.38%
Total	99	100%

Timetable No. (1)

The geography of control of the Syrian war parties
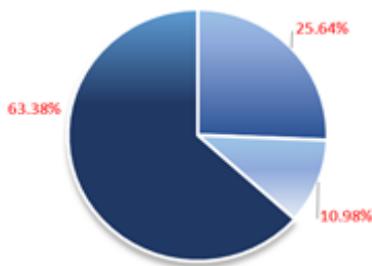
Syrian Government- 63.38%
AANES- 25.64%
The Syrian Opposition- 10.98%

Geographic distribution of the Media outlets
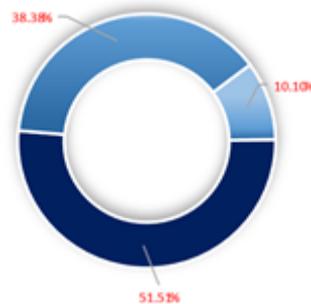
AANES regions- 51.51%
Abroad- 38.38%
The Syrian Opposition- 10.10%

From the timetable No. (1) It becomes clear that half of the Syrian Alternative Media's outlets (51.51%) operates in the areas of (AANES), which is a high rate, and it has a functional indication of the availability of a good environment for practicing journalism, and a thriving media market. However, this percentage is considered an ideal atmosphere that is characterized by the release of press freedoms with an open atmosphere and without restrictions, on the other hand. Throughout the monitoring and observation, it has become clear that many of the media outlets operating in the (AANES) areas, lack working by career roles in the light of the shortage of the specialized and efficient media cadres. Who are like the "political propaganda tools" for party blocs and political forces that are being employed to mobilize public opinion against the "competitor" or the "political opponent."

While the percentage of the Syrian alternative media presence in the areas of the Syrian opposition is decreasing, and its share is (10.10%), and it decreases gradually, after having been at the forefront of the Syrian scene with the number of alternative media outlets, as their number exceeded the threshold of a (400) outlets in the first three years of the war, and perhaps the most prominent reasons for this decline are:

1- The opposition factions have lost vast areas in favor of the Syrian government.

2- Decline in funding and support provided to these outlets.

3- Many journalists lost their lives, or are forcibly absent from the warring factions, and others have sought refuge aboard Syria.

4- The moderate secular discourse receded in those regions, after a circle of the influence of extremist Islamic forces expanded in the north and west of the country, and alongside that, the transformation of the alternative media path from a tool that keeps pace with the events of the "Syrian revolution" to a propaganda machine that shines the practices of the opposition factions and their supporters.

On the other hand, many workers in alternative media have turned their small media schemes inside Syria into pioneered media projects abroad the country, taking advantage from the network of relations that linked them with foreign media organizations and

institutions. Roughly (38.38%) of the alternative media broadcast their content from abroad Syria, especially from Turkey, some Arab countries and Europe, and most of them focused on highlighting the humanitarian aspects and Syrian refugees conditions, violations of the Syrian government army, and other times armed opposition factions' violations.
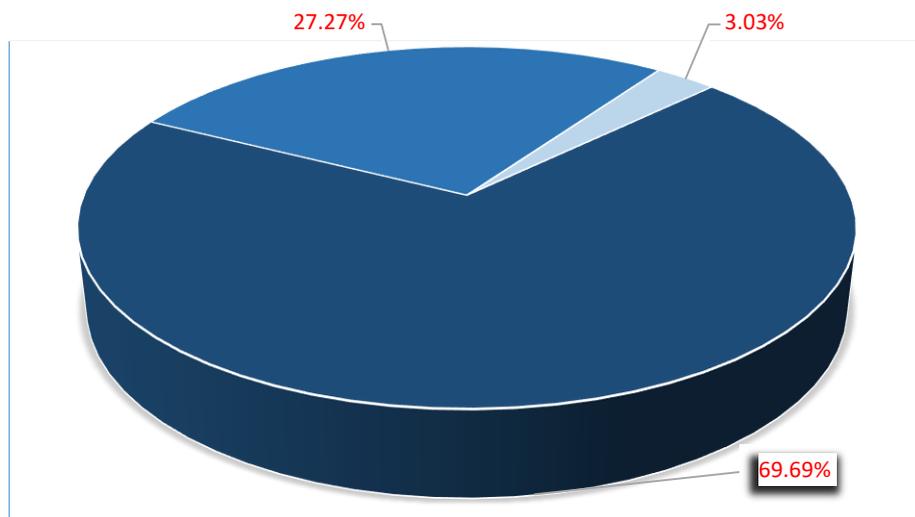
Secondly: the Identity of the Syrian alternative Media

The Identity of the Media Outlet	The Total Number of the Media Outlets	the Percentage out of 100%
Private	69	69.69%
Partisan	27	27.27%
Government	3	3.03%
Total	99	100%

The timetable No. (2)

The media outlet's identity

The form No. (3)

Govt. 3.3%   Partisan. 27. 27%   Private. 69.69%

From Table No. (2), it is clear that the private media is at the forefront of the media scene by (69.69%), while the share of the partisan media is estimated at (27.27%), or the government media constitutes (3.03%). Most of the partisanship media is concentrated in the areas of Autonomous Administration, and the reason is due to the partisan weight and presence of an enormous number of parties and ideological formations in these areas.

In fact, although the figures prove, from the table the number (2), of the recovery of private media, after it was being monopolized by in favor of government media. Nevertheless, many one of these outlets carries a symbolic and formal status in its independence, and a distance of its proximity to political events. Therefore, it can be inferred on its political agendas coated with the marketing character, by following the mechanism and angle of its news coverage of events, especially those that may collide with editorial policy of the media outlet. This can be touched in particular in the areas of the Autonomous Administration, from the financial support and editorial policy windows; the funding often comes from political parties, businesspersons, or organizations operating abroad with names and characteristics of human rights and humanitarian. The same the case can be observed in the Syrian opposition areas, which takes more extreme dimensions in the media follow-up of the course of events.

Subsequently, each one of the conflict parties employs (directly or indirectly) the alternative media platforms, to defend its agendas and political vision, and pass schemes of local or regional powers that have interests in the Syrian war. For that sake, qualified and promising media cadres were excluded, who did not like to involve in the political game or the support of any of its parties. They were replaced by others who are amateurs and unqualified, they aligned with the ideology of the party or the literature of the dominant political organization, and here the media can be described in this case as just "arms at request.", which means that "its mission violates the media honor codes, and by that the alternative media transforms, regardless of its affiliations and orientations, to be one of the tools of political and societal conflict, and to extend political literature from the window of mass communication means. Thus, undermining the basic rules on which the media is built, such as accountability, transparency, and achieving justice.

Thirdly: the media independence and the political dependency

Under this title, we will discuss the features and dimensions of the independence of the Syrian alternative media in light of the political dependency, after using the internal and external analysis mechanisms of the alternative media coverage circle of the events of the war in Syria. This gave its overall media scene unprofessional features during the communication process between the sender and the recipient. In fact; in brief, the process is more like "making acquiescence of the public opinion" with a body consistent with the rules of the " political hegemony" game, and this is a set of features that have characterized the Syrian alternative media) will be discussed and analyzed accordingly.

- The rule of selectivity and peripheral.
- The absence of transparency and institutional work.
- Marketing terminology and preconception terms).
- Media framing of identity and its stereotyping.

The rule of selectivity and peripheral.

In fact, most of the alternative media outlets have largely lost the roles of media career and have adopted selective and peripheral news broadcasts for the course of events, moving away from moderation and objective handling in the subtraction. Especially those that cover sensitive and controversial issues and this process is simply structural and functional subject to horizontal polarization in which the intensity of political tensions extends at the expense of national identity. Here, most of the alternative Syrian media focus on dumping down issues that are inconsistent with their orientations, and marketing secondary files to the top of the public's priorities. Many political events were taken out of their natural context, and their informational backgrounds were neglected in a systematic and calculated way, accompanied by the dyes of the media discourse with opinion and "colored information". These things are considered a perversion of the function of the media in the transmission of information credibly, without equivocation and fragmentation, because it leads to misleading the public, and to mold its thinking pattern in a specific direction, which has no room for acceptance of the other opinion.

The best evidence for the aforementioned is the alternative media coverage of the Turkish campaign against the city of "Afrin" in the northwest of the country, three years ago from now. Each outlet has recruited a sponsor and financier policy through its news materials.

The event was selected partially from the natural context, and the alternative media that carry an "opposition identity" supported by Turkey reported it. As a "liberation war against Kurdish separatists", meaning that the feature of favoritism appeared here with the policy of the Turkish supporter, and deliberately withheld important news details As a highlighting of (the demographic repercussions of the Turkish war on civilians, the demography of the region, the city's infrastructure, the scale of the human and material losses, and violations).

2- Absence of work and institutional work.

Despite the ability of some alternative media outlets to achieve development in the media scene and keep up with developments by awareness and responsibility, but most of them were not able to provide an objective ground for building a pluralistic and independent media that addresses the demands of the Syrians. Moreover, the low level of transparency in the absence of openness and legal accountability, and the predominance of the culture of covering up the identity of the owners of the media platforms and their political affiliations, and if there is transparency, then it takes a selective approach, it is defined by the vision and the media outlet.

On the administrative and financial levels, the identity of these media outlets is linked to their names or their supporters according to the follow-up. The administrations of these institutions have often been accused of falsifying financial statistics and bills and poor employment development, and this is what caused the suspension of financial transfers from donors, especially, the European Union countries, which allocated a budget to support human rights defense institutions and freedom of expression.

These outlets also lack the division of job roles and the holding of fair elections within the media institution. The Syrian journalist, Ghiath al-Jundi, gives his testimony on the "Untold Story" website: "I was among those who proposed the idea of establishing a radio

station that would present a new type of an independent media that is based on transparency in work, recruitment, and management. After several sessions, people who had never managed a radio station were brought in. Therefore, the donor did not train the executive manager on the management, and a board of trustees was chosen based on (apparently) friendships belonging to the management, and some members of the board of trustees worked as paid trainees, and this completely contradicts the role of the board of trustees."

3) Marketing preconception terms and judgments

The Syrian conflict has produced vocabulary and meanings with military and political connotations, aiming primarily to create a collective awareness in which the mechanism of thinking and vision aligned with the goals of marketing linguistic vocabulary, and it is often full of stereotyping, exclusion, generalization, social labelling, and mockery.

In many places, the content presented by many alternative media outlets lacks of a language that is abstract from of an opinion and preconception judgments, and it is formed in a descriptive way based on the formation of concepts and embellished and colorful sentences, accompanying scenes that include a high degree of stimulation, and a mobilizing of emotions.

If we analyze the method of passing terms after their manufacture in the Syrian alternative media, then their life cycle, as Dr. Fahd Al-Shamimary says, is subject to a homogeneous series of stages, based on the following:
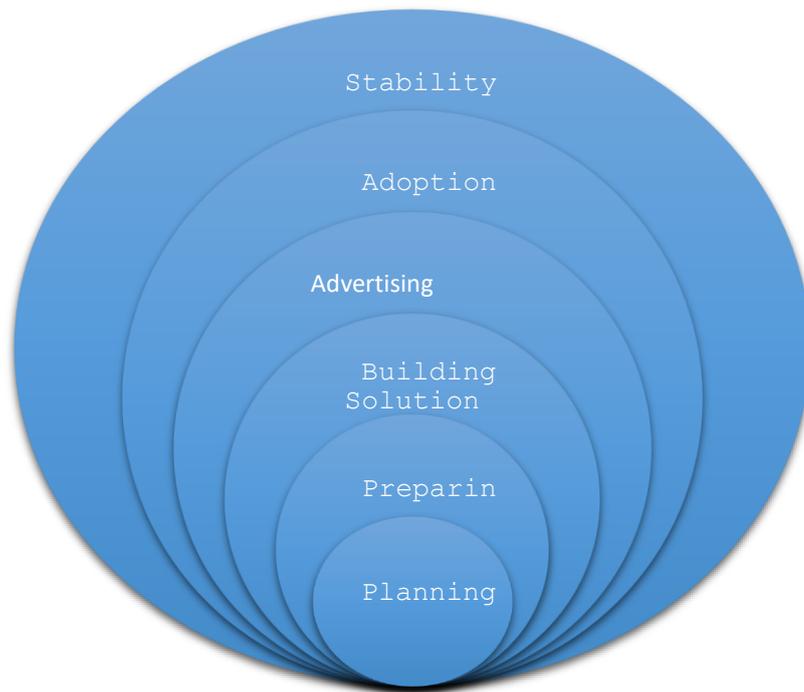
The form N. (4) the media marketing phases of the terms

1- Planning: At this stage, the tasks of the bodies responsible for the preparation and editing process are based on drawing a diagram that shows the objectives, importance, and outputs of the term being created. (Kurdish militias) One of the goals is to pit minorities against Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and the Kurdish component, raising the state of sore and charging pretexts and arguments that leads to verbal abuse and physical violence.

2- Preparation: Here the manufactured term's connections are being collected and identified with the intellectual and psychological structure for the Syrian recipient, i.e. preparing the audience to accept the idea, through a method based on inciting fear of the partial identity of the recipients, and linking it to a "competitive hostile project.". As in the example of Sunnis and Shiites, some alternative media outlets adopt an exaggerated rhetoric to incite the existence of a "Shiite project" that threatens the "Sunni presence" in the
Predominantly Sunni areas in Damascus, Aleppo and Deir Ezzor, or fabricating hostile events, and linking its reasons to some minorities.

3- Construction and settlement: the term is constructed in one word, stripped of linguistic impurities. To be circulated and

implanted in the collective memory, instead of saying that the Syrian government forces receive support from the Russians, it is shortened to "Russian proxies."

4- Advertising and publishing: one of the most dangerous stages in which the term becomes unusually popular, and difficult to control, it becomes the property of various news platforms (read, audio, visual, and electronic).

5- Adoption: At this stage, the manufactured term is adopted by all categories (ordinary people, middle-educated people, academics and intellectuals), and are used in daily life, subsequently, turning the popular term into an identity would create a clash between identities. It did occur when Alawites, Ismailis, and Druze) were stereotyped as "apostates" and "traitors", which caused by provoking hostility and aggression in areas that have been mixed in the social texture for hundreds of years, such as Homs province and the Syrian coast.

6- Stability: after the term has been manufactured and adopted, it will stabilize in the course of time after its repetition among all societal groups, to become, with the passage of time, an artificial template, to distort the image of the targeted group and become part of the recipient's daily vocabulary. An introduction the dissemination of characteristics and restricting identities within negative frameworks is contrary to the true image of indigenous communities.

In the end, we must not neglect an essential point in the mechanisms of gaining and polarizing public opinion in the media. That is the exploitation of the public's tendency (low culture and education) to thorny events (the most controversial conflict dimensions), as part of the political game, in order to "violate the public's mind" by domesticating it with absurd and chaotic contents.

4) Media framing and stereotyping of identity

American researcher Gabriel Almond says: "Everything is in Politics is communication" and this reflects the role of the media as one of the tributaries of upbringing the political situation of individuals and societies, through the huge number of events that

they are placed in specific contexts, and specific backgrounds that fit the understanding of the media message maker.

And the framing process in our study is considered to be of paramount importance, as it has been transformed into an essential feature of the Syrian alternative media when it handles with political events from stereotypical angles, in which the perpetrator becomes a victim and vice versa. During the follow-up and monitoring of the content provided by the news outlets of the Syrian opposition, we noticed that many of them frame the issues and the main characters in the news story, For example: the identity of citizens in areas under the control of the Syrian government is being framed in terms of
"Assad's popular incubator", and the areas administered by the Autonomous Administration in the north and east of the country, "the separatist Kurdish areas." there is also a media discourse that is abnormal for some of the alternative media that are affiliated with the Autonomous Administration, On the other hand. As many of them trapped into of stereotyping, by using the term "mercenaries". Even for some of the unarmed civilians who lost their lives in the bombings that hit the areas of the opposition factions, they were also unable to address all social groups in their areas in the required manner, and their role was limited to stereotypical symbolic roles, without carrying any natural significance.

Here, it must be noted that stereotyping and creating negative golden images of an identified social group does not come out of blue, but rather it is an extension of cognitive structures, knowledge, and accumulated convictions for those in charge of communication process, disseminating judgments, and placing events in certain frameworks, in the end, serve the agendas of the supporters. In the first case, opposition's media, which its discourse depends on the Turkish, Saudi, Qatari or Egyptian funder.

While in the second case, the Autonomous Administration's media or its opponents are more related to the tendencies of parties and intellectual organizations, which suffer from partisan conflict, and political quotas.

This intertwined circle of political connections creates an atmosphere in which is not being fair to the media, but on the

contrary, an opinion and a marginalized vision of real events prevail over it. The political dependency becomes an outlet for the viability of the alternative media, and it is a fuel of the internal struggle of "self-destruction" at the same time.

What paved the way for the emergence of identity problems after, internal and external support and funding, is the absence of a patriotic identity umbrella amongst Syrians, which is also a natural result of the Syrian government practices, which excluded social components from the participation in the decision-making circle, and did not give them a sense of security and belonging, and this generated in the latter a reaction that caused the tyranny of partial identity, and a rule that became resorting to the outside is a window to feel the independence of its entity.

Fourth: Loyalty and Subordination to the Political Agenda

The Syrian experience in alternative media represents a form that is closer to media mobilization teams, rather than news coverage teams, and these mobilization teams occurred in the course of the Syrian war events in the trap of mobilizing the public opinion. In addition, framing it from a window that the revolutionary mood mixes with the begging of emotions and reactions, to be drifted even more from a professional and balance path in the editorial processing, and the news wording of events during the periods of political crisis, and developments on the ground.

The emerging Syrian media trends, tendencies, and discourse were divided according to the divisions of the Syrian political parties, and they were affected by the accelerating political and military changes of the Syrian file on several levels, which were reflected on the map of the Syrian media in a way that made it an anxious, unstable, and rapidly changing map.

1- The political dependence

In order to understand the media map, we must first encompass the political and military actors, and the countries that provide the media with financial support and political cover; any political act, whatever its objectives, requires a clear media policy, and a media discourse with specific vocabulary, contents and methods.

Accordingly, the map of the alternative media has witnessed changes through which it dedicated a wide area of its media activity. As a course of intellectual confrontation, and fought in the midst of internal political conflicts at the expense of ideal goals such as the promotion of Syrians' civil and political rights, documenting acts of violence from all parties of the conflict, and holding the Syrian government accountable, and the accused factions and organizations of committing atrocities, and war crimes.

Soon later, the Syrian alternative media gradually followed the agendas of regional and international powers, and their local proxies, to reflect a factional media discourse at the expense of the patriotic discourse umbrella. This matter set the stage for correcting the media processing towards creating a political climate that justifies the control of the parties of the conflict, and in light of political polarization. The local media, which controls a large part of the Syrian media, specialized studies in the media now exclude the term "neutral" from the classifications of the Syrian media, and divide it according to each trend to "loyal, opponent, and Kurdish".

This situation has also moved to a further level, and turned into an ideological war, with Syrian tools, and many factors for this negative turning point of the Syrian alternative media path, including:

1- The absence of self-censorship and criticism, and the emergence of emotional and reactions in the newsletter coverage.

2- Adopting a hardline ideology, which has been marketed to settle the scores of competing sectarian and nationalist forces.

3- The absence of an effective monitoring body to control and correct the path of the media compass in a manner consistent with the standards and rights of expression of opinion.

4- Transformation of journalists who do not possess the competence and organizational experience into employees who are subjected to the decisions of the actual holders of power.

5- The control of partial identities due to incitement, counter-violence, and the decay of the collective identity.

6- An almost total dependence on foreign funding, without taking the initiative to diversify sources of funding that does not affect the editorial policy.

Accordingly, we have been in front of propaganda institutions affiliated with internal or external bodies at the expense of supporting the collective patriotic identity of the Syrians, and the margin of freedom to achieve reform and integrity has decreased in these institutions. Especially in light of a scene dominated by Islamism, extremist militarization, and ideological secularism, and the media speeches that accompany them touching upon the emotional and begging side. In order to win the feelings and tendencies of the Syrian public.

In an interview with Dr. Masoud Hamed, an academic and journalist specializing in the Syrian issue (he praised the role of the alternative media at the beginning of its emergence as a window and an outlet for the Syrian public. However, he made a reservation concerning its politicized role later, saying: "Unfortunately, we were surprised by the emergence of more aggressive and extremist media platforms and institutions. From the regime's media, thus, it was complementary to marginalizing and obliterating the features of other non-Arab cultures.

In his remarks on the role of alternative media in the Autonomous Administration areas during the war, he says, "In Rojava areas (the local name for the regions of North and East Syria). There were things that made the media staff unprofessional because of the domination of ideological thinking on the one hand, and clinging to national thinking, on the other hand. It was also a product of the racist policy that the Ba'ath Party practiced against the Kurds, which was accompanied by a systematic denial of their admission in the Media and Political Science Faculties."

Therefore, it can be said; despite the availability of most of the elements for the inception of a professional media in the Autonomous Administration areas, the partisan character with its narrow mentality made its way to strike professionalism. The media became harnessed to serve specific agendas; subsequently the bet has become to get rid of factional and partisan sense of isolation complex, and grooming the people despite of their different affiliations and ideologies.

In the end, the approach to events was from a point of view that served the policy of the funder and the plans of the supporters, without adopting any patriotic media project or a clear strategy to form a conscious public opinion of the issues being discussed. On the contrary, it formulated a political division situation that would consolidate the chances of disrupting the social fabric and eroding collective concepts of the Syrian citizenship.

2) Features of political dependency in the Syrian alternative media during years of war
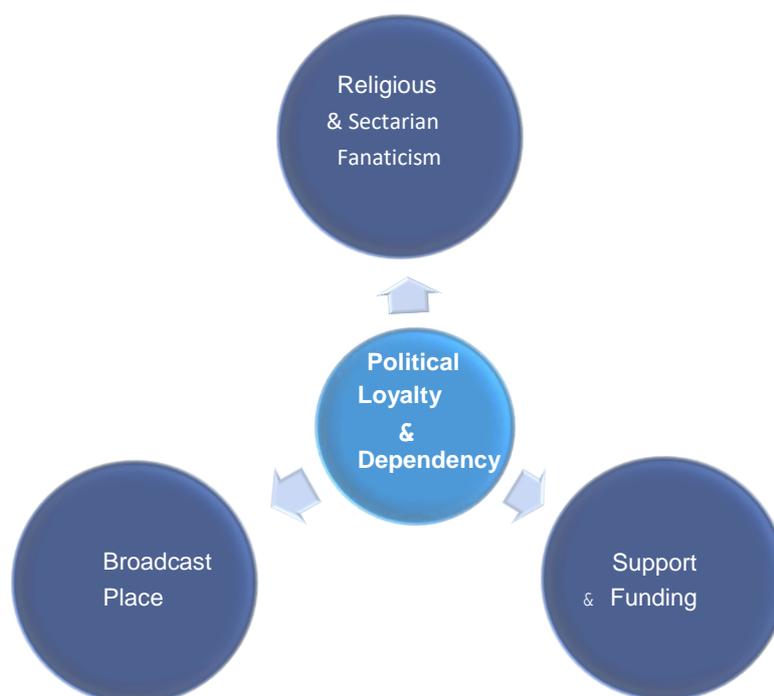
Form No. (5): Features of political dependency in the Syrian alternative media

Fanaticism of religious and sectarian affiliation

Many alternative media follow religious (sectarian) whims, in which affiliation to the same cult is the common denominator between follower and followed. This paved the way to escalate the intensity of the media discourse, which slipped into mazes of "sectarian betrayal", insulting sanctities, and disrespect for religious feelings, so news platforms emerged that divided the political actors in the Syrian war into groups (Sunni, Alawites, Druze, Christians, and Ismailis). In order to confer a scene with internal hostilities and accusations against rivalries, yet the most convincing effect of their

message was to touch upon the motional string during the intellectual processing of news materials, and launching from selectivity in the history of religious groups. Beside the renewal of their roles with new functions and levels, and perhaps this narrow approach is one of the most important indicators of deepening the gap between the Syrian people and many Syrian alternative media outlets, in which hardline Islamic factions took over some of their news circles.

It was steadily in line with the extremist Islamist tendencies in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Turkey, which has reinforced the Syrian street's fears of the agendas of alternative media outlets that have been associated with radicalism in tackling and introducing, and it turned into fanaticism based on religion, doctrine, and random accusation at the expense of transparency.

Turkey, for example, as the supportive force for hardline Islamic movements, the Muslim Brotherhood, in particular, has tickled the sentiments of "Sunnah" from time to time within the sources of influence. They used the tool for national political goals in the region, While Saudi policy has clashed (and continues to clash) with the problem of its historical and ideological institutions, that generates Salafist ideology.

It has come to point of allocating TV programs hosting "poets" and "historians" who stir up sectarian bigotry on the news screens, by bringing up some historical events (controversial and unproven), symbolic religious figures. This was evident when "Al-Jisr Channel" allocated episodes of the "Knights of the Platform" program for the Iraqi poet "Walid Al-Khashmani" to recite poetry verses that allow the spilling of Shiites' blood. In addition to antagonize their religious beliefs, and the same thing for the Gulf countries that hosted the two TV channels (Wessal and Safa), which worked to pit the Syrian components against each other, under the name of "religious jihad."

Support and Funding

Most media outlets are linked directly or indirectly to political allegiances and ideological orientations, that have changing goals and intentions, and political connections change with the change of financial needs and requirements. Therefore, political domination of media ownership is one of the most important concerns that

paves the way for the politicization of the media scene, and undermines attempts of avoiding bias.

Media ownership greatly influences media content, and plays an essential role in polishing public opinion; when politicians control the media, they can use it to serve their interests through biased coverage, enhance their political status, and attack their competitors. Private media organizations are not an exception to this pattern, given that they might be politically affiliated to the same extent as the state-owned media, and serve the private interests of their owners and their allies.

Generally, media actors take the path of the drawn editorial line that is compatible with the funder policy, which means the alternative media could not fund its expenditure through advertisements and sales, thus, the need of a permanent source for sustainable support provided to it.

In this part, most of the Syrian alternative media suffer from major challenges, most notably the compromise between achieving the interests of the funder, and conveying the media message in a professional and transparent manner. Perhaps the predominance of the first challenge over the editorial policy have listed the media message within the bias category and have embodied it as a "paid tool", so obtaining the approval of the supporter has become more important than gaining the trust of the community.

This is a glimpse of the most influential parties in the Syrian alternative media capital market:

- The media outlets funded by the Gulf states and organizations were holding agendas of an Islamic nature, and we are talking here about countries such as (Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Kuwait, and Qatar), each one of them had its own priorities and drawn plans that its general scene was dominated by sectarian conflict, and economic competition.

The media outlets, which were funded by Western countries or organizations, were more secular in its orientations, but there was some intellectual experience within it. Some of countries (Britain, and some other European countries) that withdrew funding and support from some alternative media, after an imbalance appeared

in the financial and administrative statements, and the advertising roles assigned to them had ended.

- The countries neighboring Syria, in turn, provided support through mediation channels or in direct way, and they made the Syrian interior an open arena for settling accounts or working to export their internal crises. Here we are talking about Turkey, which is the most embracing geographies of the Syrian alternative media abroad; it has been lenient in providing broadcasting licenses to alternative media, in exchange for ensuring that these media support their political battles abroad, especially in Syria. Thus, money has been pouring steadily into the media market.

Therefore, the divisions that prevailed in the positions of the supporting countries overshadowed the direction of the alternative Syrian media, as money is the master of the game, if Saudi Arabia attacks Qatar, the outlets supported by Saudi Arabia, will attack the factions affiliated with Qatar, and vice versa.

Consequently, most of the alternative media has a culture of "dependency", and they have become tools for implementing the agendas of states. They have lost their independence and honesty, and they have become in a more vulnerable position, they no longer value the importance of the Syrian national identity.
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The manager of Ethical Journalism Network, Aidan White believes that governments, politicians, and a wide range of global media organizations have impact on the selection of news, the program of media priorities, and they put pressure on journalists and try to eliminate their power by cutting and restricting of the media funding.

Achieving the independence of media institutions, and escaping from pressure obstacles by the owners of money will only be achieved by the necessity of editorial independence, which cannot be achieved unless there is unconditional funding at all. Funding that does not impose editorial restrictions, to ensure that its editorship remains uncompromised, until being able to make profits, either by financing readers and subscriptions, or by providing consulting and training services, or small-scale investment, according to what platform "Megaphone" confirms.

While academic and journalist, Masoud Hamed finds no ways to get rid of the dominance of the financiers unless there is a law that supports independent media institutions and encourages competition on scientific and methodological grounds, giving them a big space of freedom. So that they can be able in dispensing from the political money that is pumped from abroad, and at the same time, the media worker can create creativity in his field because he becomes more independent, away from controlling the sources of support and funding its decisions and directions.

The location of broadcasting

The alternative media operating outside Syria are concentrated in Turkey, with 56.4%, It is followed by Europe with 20%, and the rest of the media are distributed mainly to the following countries (UAE, Qatar, Jordan, Iraq, America), and the place of broadcasting of media outlets greatly affects the mechanism of their coverage of events. As these media remain pawn to the laws and policies of countries and the controlling forces of the aspects of life, whether the space of freedom is opened or restricted, any collision or entanglement with the agenda of these groups will put the fate of these outlets before two options. The first is to turn the medium into a political propaganda tool for the country that hosts its news broadcast in exchange for maintaining the continuity of its media work. Subsequently, professional and ethics abuse of media responsibilities and functions, and the second option: its exposure to harassment and confiscation, and the closure of its offices, in case they do not incorporates with the policy of the state.

The Turkish case, which has turned into a center of media and political opposition activity, can be seen as an example. Most of the Syrian alternative media outlets adopt a policy that is aligned with the official rhetoric of the ruling Justice and Development Party in Turkey. For example, these outlets neglected, in many places, to highlight the practices of the Turkish army in Syria and Libya, as it often avoided going into events related to sending Syrian fighters to Libya or Armenia by Turkey to defend its interests there, and if it mentions the event, its view will be from a shallow and narrow angle.

Here is one of the models of political investment for the Syrian alternative media to impose hegemony and intellectual control. The transformation of some of the Syrian alternative media of their

political affiliations in line with the Qatari and Turkish policies, to a different destination that aligns with the agenda of some Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE. This is what actually happened with the escalation of the Gulf crisis, which reflect on the way these outlets treat events, and here lies the role of the "news gatekeeper" that allows or neglects, and excludes vocabulary and information that is inconsistent with the editorial plan of the media outlet, and keeps the editorial space free of "counter opinion".

Based on the foregoing; We can infer features that the media dependency is not separated from the other types of dependency that bind, as "Emmanuel Wallenstein" says "The sides to the center", media dependency is one of the aspects of comprehensive dependency that pull the sides with the power of the center and make them dependent completely on it.

Fourthly: the framework of outcomes and recommendations

The outcomes: Based on the foregoing, the following conclusions can be reached:

1- The Syrian war has resulted in an unfair and subjective media that mixes between opinion and news, and incites violence, hatred and societal divisiveness.

2- The political conflict and the emotional fuelling were major reasons for the state of the alternative media in terms of political dependence and loyalty.

3- Capital and the political background have a great influence on the editorial policy of the Syrian alternative media, as it comes to getting many important topics out of their general context and shaping them in a way that contradicts the truth.

4- The place of broadcasting in both inside and outside the country imposes (politicized) rules and standards on the mechanism of media coverage.

5- Many media platforms have turned into ideological platforms, which are employed to serve the agendas of the parties, states and political forces that dominate the outlet.

6- The role of the theories of "agenda order" and "gatekeeper" emerges as most of the theories being used to influence the collective awareness of the Syrian recipient, in which the functioned selectivity is being followed in media presentation.

9- The rate of political dependency in the alternative media increases with the escalation of political events' severity, and relating the event with the interests of the funders and their incubator intellectual.

10- The Syrian alternative media is as close as possible from being a "political propaganda" tool than having the characteristics of mass communication media.

11- The satisfaction of the financier and the sponsor has become more important than satisfying the needs of the Syrian public, in the first place, for news and knowledge about issues of concern for them.

12- Absence of self-censorship and criticism, the emergence of emotionality, and reactions in news coverage, and this is reflected in its effects on the knowledge and behavior of the receiving audience.

13- The absence of an effective supervisory authority that corrects the course of the media compass, and the shortcomings in the media's career hierarchy.

4- Almost total dependence on foreign funding, and the absence of diversification of funding sources that limit the impact on the editorial policy of the media.

Recommendations

1- The importance of having the media code of honor for the Syrian media, in which the financier leaves a space of freedom for the journalist or the media institution during news coverage so that he does not interfere in its editorial.

2- Diversification of alternative media funding sources, and it is much better to rely on public support and its own potential.

3- Organizing conferences and seminars tackling the impact of political dependency on the media functions, and agree upon the independence of the media as a demand and right from audience's rights.

4- The Syrian alternative media respect the opponent opinion to their destinations, without stalemate or stereotyping.

5- Establishing a higher council for the Syrian patriotic media to monitor media outputs and policy.

6- The establishment of free zones for the media in the areas under the control of the conflicting parties by human rights and media organizations that would be under the auspices of leading human rights and media organizations, to enjoy greater freedom and liberation from restrictions of political parties, and military factions.

7- The alternative media adoption of the language of tolerance and the inclusive media discourse for the Syrians, so that they bring views closer, and avoid turning news platforms into arenas for settling accounts. Rather, it is more useful that they would be arenas of understanding and sharing views.

8- Creating awareness within media organizations that value the importance of bias only for the demands and rights of society, because others create a gap, and a structural and functional rift in the media work.

7- Establishing (neutral) evaluation and follow-up units that document Syrian news platforms and outlets, which incite hostility, abuse, and market of hybrid political concepts in the media space, and work to correct its course or punish it legally and penal proceedings.

10- Conducting field studies of the divided Syrian societies in terms of the circles of control of the conflicting parties, to demonstrate the impact of political media marketing on their affiliations and convictions, and even to the degree of their acceptance of the other at the present time or future.

11- The Syrian intellectual and elites should organize media campaigns that reject imposing political impositions and opinions,

and encouraging the adoption of an open media discourse that simulates the demands and rights of Syrians at all their identities and affiliations, and building mutual trust.

12- The need to respect the privacy of partial identities (nationalities, ethnicities, and ideologies) in Syria, participating them fairly and realistically in its news circle, and integrating them into the Syrian patriotic identity in all Syrian media outlets.

13- Building direct communication channels (programs and media materials), and satisfying their desires and needs, without excluding any identity or favoring another.

14- Separating any union or body of journalists from any political or military body.

15- International and regional press associations and unions organizing of training workshops, and panel discussions that consolidate the just and ethical concepts of media, and appear the repercussions of loyalty and political recruitment for media tools on the credibility of the media outlet, and the ethics of journalists.

16- The Syrian alternative media's adoption of capable journalists from distinguished media capabilities and competencies and linked to expertise and political awareness.

17- Establishing training programs for junior journalists that include professional and technical principles, and dedicating moral responsibility to qualify them to carry out journalism in the best and neutral way.

18- The consensus of the Syrian alternative media, with their different views, on a reference media document that prohibits the media from circulating the political terms and materials that causes insult or intimidation to the syrians' feelings and their entity, and considering the Syrian interest above all response and consideration.

19- The importance of the Syrian alternative media is entering into partnership agreements, and fellowships with (non-profit) press unions, which are known for their professionalism and objectivity, to benefit from its expertise, fairness, and honesty in reporting

news, especially with regard to achieving balance in news coverage that radiate and diverge partisan and political interests.