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Drama and the Reality of Human Rights

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Drama and the Reality of Human Rights

It is an initiative launched by the Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue (FDHRD) consisting of 500 associations and development organizations in 9 governorates that aims to enhance the human rights situation in Egypt, strengthen partnerships and exchange experiences.

The NGOs participating in the initiative are distributed in 9 governorates: Cairo, Gharbia, Beheira, Alexandria, Beni Suef, Sohag, Luxor, Qena and Aswan.

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Introduction

Egypt is known for its long history of radio and television dramas and series, many of which were broadcast in Arabic-speaking countries. This began since the inauguration of the Egyptian Radio in 1934, and has continued to this day, producing thousands of radio and television series that attracted millions of viewers and made the Egyptian dialect the most common, understood, and famous dialect in the Arab countries. Drama is one of the favourite forms of television that segments of society are attracted to, because it addresses various life situations and arouses in the viewer the desire to simulate what is presented to him, as drama represents an essential part of life. Some view it as presenting life and its issues and problems as it helps the viewer identify types of characters that they may not be able to see in reality. The Egyptian public is keen on watching Egyptian drama because of the importance it represents related to the issues it lives in society.

TV drama has a role in promoting a culture of human rights and spreading awareness of them among citizens. It is considered one of the most important arts that have the ability to indirectly address issues of public concern and can, if exploited to influence its capabilities, support human rights values and work to spread the culture and principles of human rights.

Drama has a special status in terms of permeability of impact on the audience compared to other types of creativity such as novels, short stories and poetry. Many works of great writers were not broadcasted and spread to the masses until after they took the dramatic form. Drama in general, and television drama in particular, has a great impact on the emotional and behavioural levels because it is far from direct directive messages, and presents the values that need to be consolidated in a humanitarian template that touches the lives of citizens.

There has been a tangible development in the interest of television drama in human rights issues and principles. Some dramas have recently helped to spread a great degree of awareness of some human rights issues, but on the other hand, many dramas did not help to support and consolidate human rights values in society, but rather helped to spread negative and anti-human rights values and customs in society, as a result of the ability of these works to spread and spark controversy. TV drama has come to affect the behaviour of community members such as bullying, violence, rioting, the spread of drugs and harassment, in addition to the collapse and disintegration of the family due to the high divorce rates, the spread of thoughts of marital infidelity, and violations of the rights of women and children. Dramas affect children who tend to imitate, especially when the hero is



loved, in addition to the values and behaviours it promotes that are alien to society.

We will discuss this topic through several axes, as follows: clarifying what is meant by drama, explaining the role played by drama in raising awareness of human rights, analysing the negative and positive impact of drama on human rights with the presentation of some examples of Egyptian dramas, presenting the efforts of the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) in supporting dramas that work to spread awareness of human rights, and presenting some proposals to increase the effectiveness of drama in positively affecting human rights.

What Is Meant by Drama

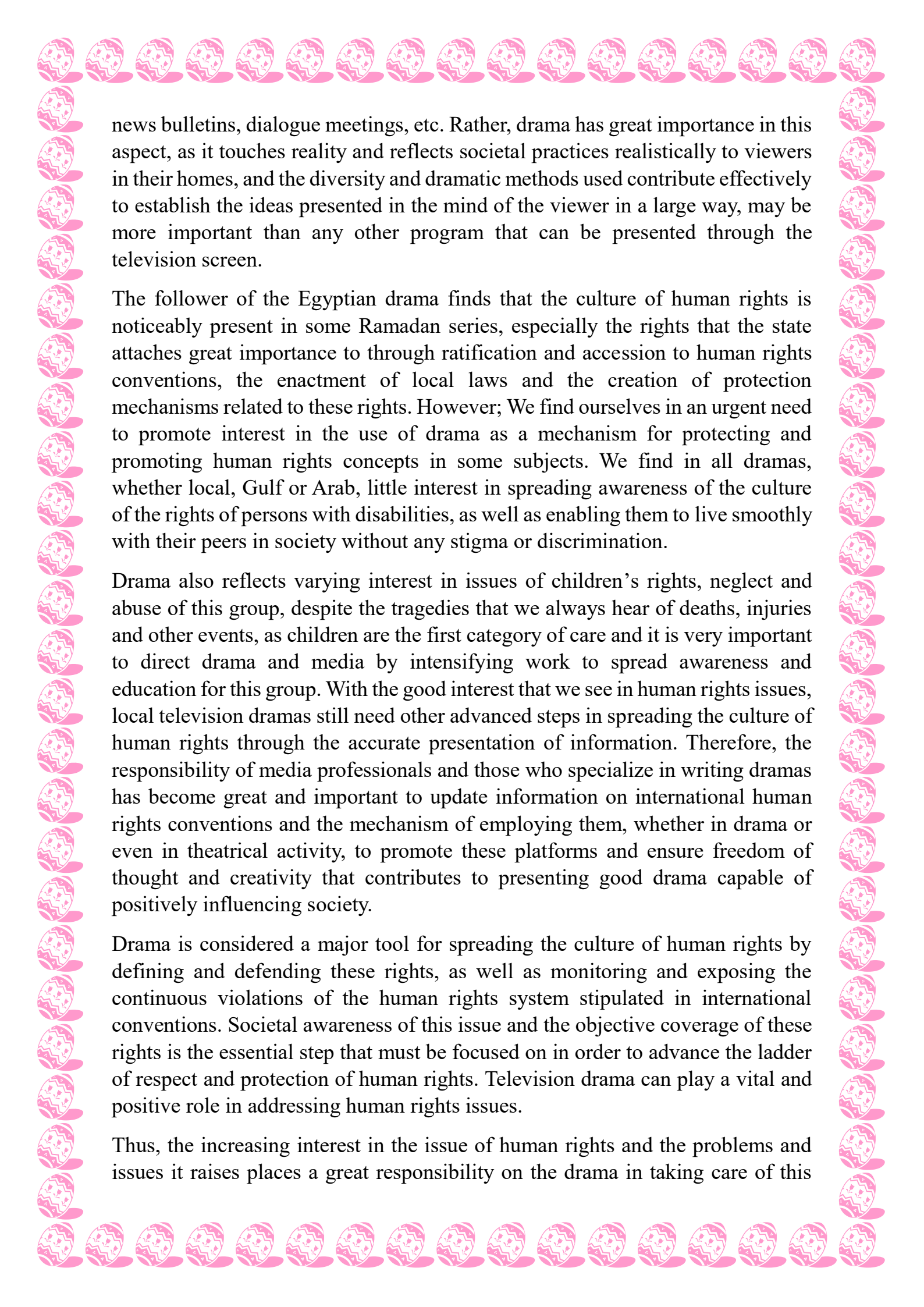
It is a simulation of human behaviour and its presentation, as it quotes its material from real life and re-enacts reality in a believable way and in a special style that has an integrated artistic nature through which it can influence the viewers' feelings, ideas and attitudes. Drama is defined as an art form based on the writer's perception of a specific story that revolves around a group of different characters who go through many successive situations and events, where that story is presented by a group of actors who imitate real characters in reality in their words and actions.

It is an art performed on theatre, television, radio, or cinema. It is a term given to plays and acting in general. It is also defined as an exciting, emotional, or unexpected event or circumstance. It is defined literary as a composition of poetry or prose that aims to depict life, character, or tell a story that usually involves conflicts and emotions through action and dialogue usually designed for theatrical performance.

The first goal of the drama in presenting any work is to shed light on some of the problems and scourges of society and convey a direct or indirect message to the viewers so that they can take a lesson from it and pass it on to future generations, in addition to education, guidance, awareness and development in all its cultural, social, political, economic, moral, religious and intellectual forms, and contribute to the achievement of education and upbringing.

The Role of Drama in Raising Awareness of Human Rights Issues

Visual media is considered one of the most influential means on the individual in society, which means that this media outlet has a great responsibility in the field of human rights education, and this responsibility comes through the diversity of programs broadcasted by television in particular. The matter is not limited to educating society about the culture of human rights through cultural programs,



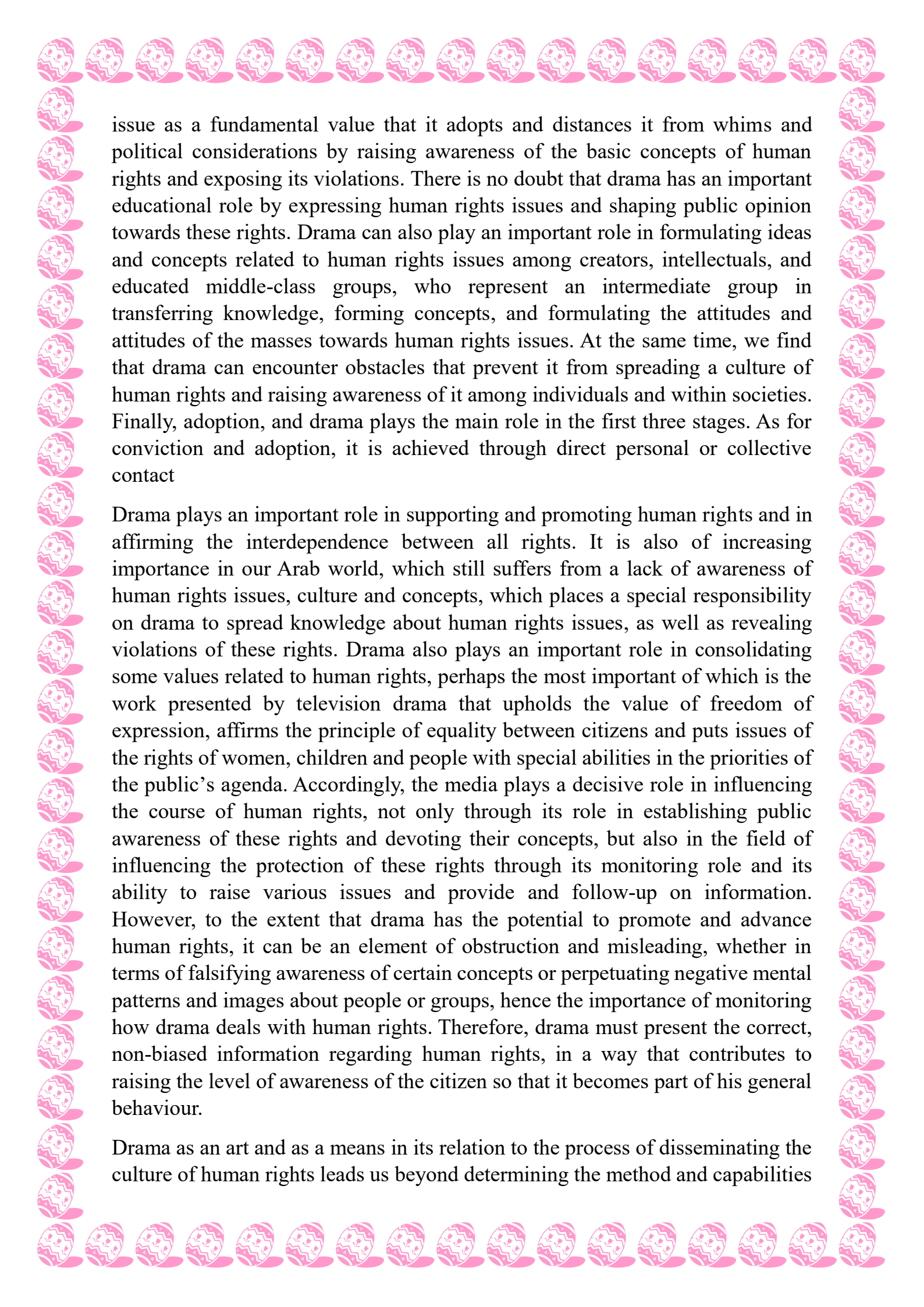
news bulletins, dialogue meetings, etc. Rather, drama has great importance in this aspect, as it touches reality and reflects societal practices realistically to viewers in their homes, and the diversity and dramatic methods used contribute effectively to establish the ideas presented in the mind of the viewer in a large way, may be more important than any other program that can be presented through the television screen.

The follower of the Egyptian drama finds that the culture of human rights is noticeably present in some Ramadan series, especially the rights that the state attaches great importance to through ratification and accession to human rights conventions, the enactment of local laws and the creation of protection mechanisms related to these rights. However; We find ourselves in an urgent need to promote interest in the use of drama as a mechanism for protecting and promoting human rights concepts in some subjects. We find in all dramas, whether local, Gulf or Arab, little interest in spreading awareness of the culture of the rights of persons with disabilities, as well as enabling them to live smoothly with their peers in society without any stigma or discrimination.

Drama also reflects varying interest in issues of children's rights, neglect and abuse of this group, despite the tragedies that we always hear of deaths, injuries and other events, as children are the first category of care and it is very important to direct drama and media by intensifying work to spread awareness and education for this group. With the good interest that we see in human rights issues, local television dramas still need other advanced steps in spreading the culture of human rights through the accurate presentation of information. Therefore, the responsibility of media professionals and those who specialize in writing dramas has become great and important to update information on international human rights conventions and the mechanism of employing them, whether in drama or even in theatrical activity, to promote these platforms and ensure freedom of thought and creativity that contributes to presenting good drama capable of positively influencing society.

Drama is considered a major tool for spreading the culture of human rights by defining and defending these rights, as well as monitoring and exposing the continuous violations of the human rights system stipulated in international conventions. Societal awareness of this issue and the objective coverage of these rights is the essential step that must be focused on in order to advance the ladder of respect and protection of human rights. Television drama can play a vital and positive role in addressing human rights issues.


Thus, the increasing interest in the issue of human rights and the problems and issues it raises places a great responsibility on the drama in taking care of this



issue as a fundamental value that it adopts and distances it from whims and political considerations by raising awareness of the basic concepts of human rights and exposing its violations. There is no doubt that drama has an important educational role by expressing human rights issues and shaping public opinion towards these rights. Drama can also play an important role in formulating ideas and concepts related to human rights issues among creators, intellectuals, and educated middle-class groups, who represent an intermediate group in transferring knowledge, forming concepts, and formulating the attitudes and attitudes of the masses towards human rights issues. At the same time, we find that drama can encounter obstacles that prevent it from spreading a culture of human rights and raising awareness of it among individuals and within societies. Finally, adoption, and drama plays the main role in the first three stages. As for conviction and adoption, it is achieved through direct personal or collective contact

Drama plays an important role in supporting and promoting human rights and in affirming the interdependence between all rights. It is also of increasing importance in our Arab world, which still suffers from a lack of awareness of human rights issues, culture and concepts, which places a special responsibility on drama to spread knowledge about human rights issues, as well as revealing violations of these rights. Drama also plays an important role in consolidating some values related to human rights, perhaps the most important of which is the work presented by television drama that upholds the value of freedom of expression, affirms the principle of equality between citizens and puts issues of the rights of women, children and people with special abilities in the priorities of the public's agenda. Accordingly, the media plays a decisive role in influencing the course of human rights, not only through its role in establishing public awareness of these rights and devoting their concepts, but also in the field of influencing the protection of these rights through its monitoring role and its ability to raise various issues and provide and follow-up on information. However, to the extent that drama has the potential to promote and advance human rights, it can be an element of obstruction and misleading, whether in terms of falsifying awareness of certain concepts or perpetuating negative mental patterns and images about people or groups, hence the importance of monitoring how drama deals with human rights. Therefore, drama must present the correct, non-biased information regarding human rights, in a way that contributes to raising the level of awareness of the citizen so that it becomes part of his general behaviour.

Drama as an art and as a means in its relation to the process of disseminating the culture of human rights leads us beyond determining the method and capabilities

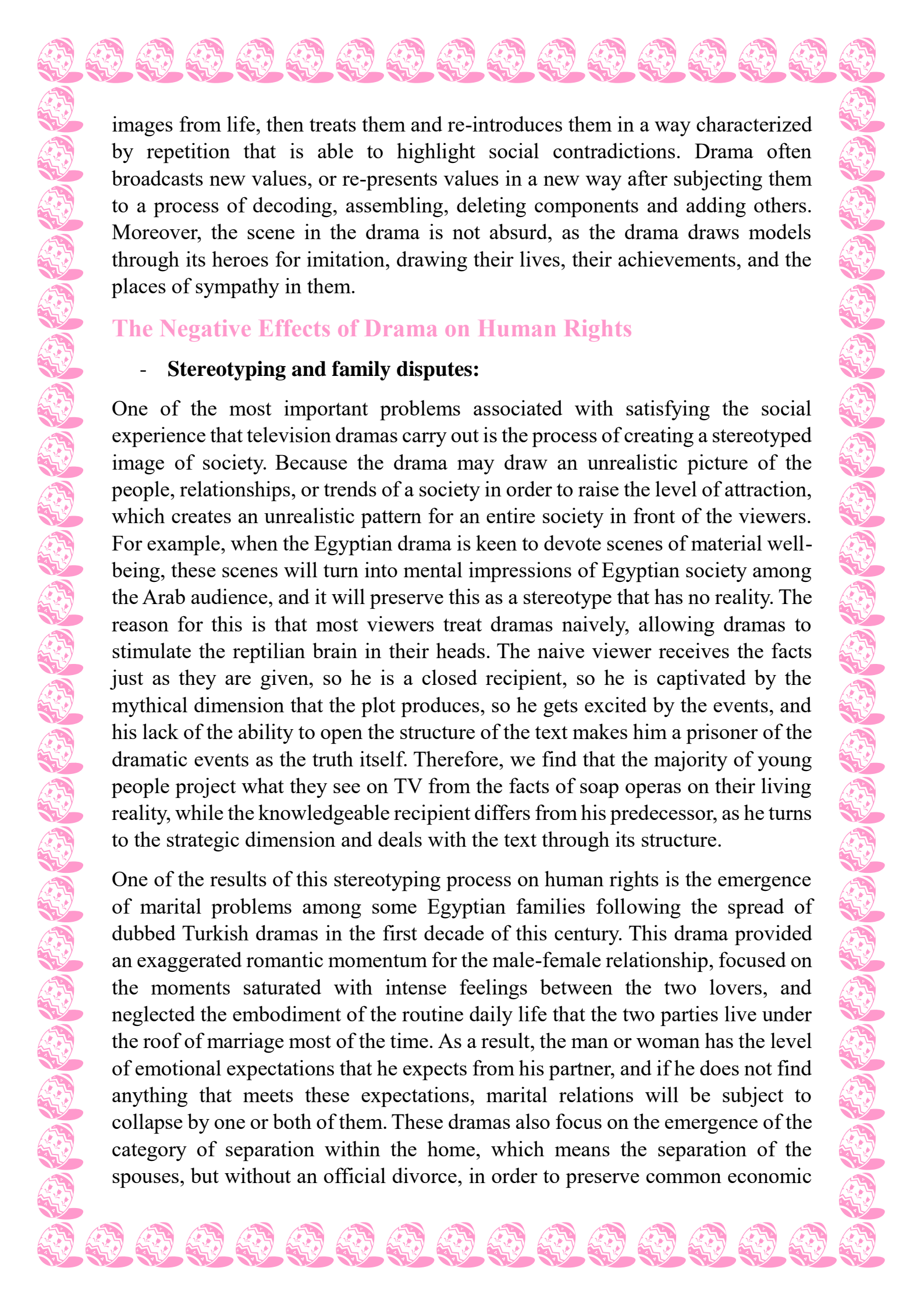


available for drama to play a role in spreading the culture of human rights in view of drama itself as a human right. This is also stipulated in detail and in general by Articles (21), (22), (24) and (27) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Here, drama is as much a means of spreading the culture of human rights as one of the components of this culture that is intended to be disseminated, as it belongs to aesthetic and educational rights and the right to freedom of expression. For example, only Article (27) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that “everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits” and that “Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.”

These are the elements of Article (27), which focused on two rights related to culture and creativity, namely the right to receive and enjoy culture, and the right to create culture and protect this creativity. The two rights fall under the broader title of the right to freely participate in the cultural life of society. Therefore, and based on the foregoing, a radical view of the role of drama in spreading the culture of human rights must be given, because drama, before it is a tool or means, is an artistic vision with philosophical, social and political implications. Likewise, the culture of human rights, before it is a formula for coexistence, is a vision of life with philosophical, social, and political implications.

Logically, there is no conflict for drama between balancing achieving material gains and observing human rights values. Human rights are not only limited to laws, but art can also express them. Some series tend to consider themselves mere spaces for entertainment, but the prevalence of the principle of considering television drama, after its long history, as just a means of entertainment and the absence of its cultural, social and humanitarian role in establishing principles affecting human rights and rights, is a matter that harms the Egyptian collective mind, of which drama is been part of his consciousness since the sixties until now, through hundreds of dramas with different themes and forms, influential personalities, and details that came off the screen and became part of language, history, society, and public conscience.

Television drama in Ramadan in particular affects values, tastes, and even words, as many of its works turn into conversations between people, and ideas that move in society and are circulated by many people; Rather, some children are given the names of the heroes of the Arab series, and what they offer is reflected in people's tastes, and some of the heroes in successful dramas are used in commodity and tourism promotion operations. Dramatic production extracts specific models and




images from life, then treats them and re-introduces them in a way characterized by repetition that is able to highlight social contradictions. Drama often broadcasts new values, or re-presents values in a new way after subjecting them to a process of decoding, assembling, deleting components and adding others. Moreover, the scene in the drama is not absurd, as the drama draws models through its heroes for imitation, drawing their lives, their achievements, and the places of sympathy in them.

The Negative Effects of Drama on Human Rights

- **Stereotyping and family disputes:**

One of the most important problems associated with satisfying the social experience that television dramas carry out is the process of creating a stereotyped image of society. Because the drama may draw an unrealistic picture of the people, relationships, or trends of a society in order to raise the level of attraction, which creates an unrealistic pattern for an entire society in front of the viewers. For example, when the Egyptian drama is keen to devote scenes of material well-being, these scenes will turn into mental impressions of Egyptian society among the Arab audience, and it will preserve this as a stereotype that has no reality. The reason for this is that most viewers treat dramas naively, allowing dramas to stimulate the reptilian brain in their heads. The naive viewer receives the facts just as they are given, so he is a closed recipient, so he is captivated by the mythical dimension that the plot produces, so he gets excited by the events, and his lack of the ability to open the structure of the text makes him a prisoner of the dramatic events as the truth itself. Therefore, we find that the majority of young people project what they see on TV from the facts of soap operas on their living reality, while the knowledgeable recipient differs from his predecessor, as he turns to the strategic dimension and deals with the text through its structure.

One of the results of this stereotyping process on human rights is the emergence of marital problems among some Egyptian families following the spread of dubbed Turkish dramas in the first decade of this century. This drama provided an exaggerated romantic momentum for the male-female relationship, focused on the moments saturated with intense feelings between the two lovers, and neglected the embodiment of the routine daily life that the two parties live under the roof of marriage most of the time. As a result, the man or woman has the level of emotional expectations that he expects from his partner, and if he does not find anything that meets these expectations, marital relations will be subject to collapse by one or both of them. These dramas also focus on the emergence of the category of separation within the home, which means the separation of the spouses, but without an official divorce, in order to preserve common economic



interests, or for fear of social criticism around them, or out of consideration for the feelings of the children. However, all these explanations for this marital situation do not deny that it may lead to marital infidelity due to the lack of satisfaction of the desires and needs of each of the spouses, and therefore this clarity is more harmful than beneficial. Unfortunately, this form has become widespread in our Egyptian society as a result of being influenced by such Turkish series and others.

In addition to the high rate of customary marriage in Egyptian drama, which must be done to limit the display of this issue in drama because it has become a justification for some and a reason to increase the rate of customary marriage as a reality in society that must be accepted. It can be said that the use of verbal or physical violence is one of the negative behaviours that is completely rejected, whether in the context of the presented drama or in actual reality, because it represents an insult to dignity, entrenches negative feelings between spouses, increases problems between them, and may lead to divorce. In addition, the lack of respect for the family of the other party (husband /wife) raises feelings of hatred and anger within the same partner, because the relationship of a person with his family remains the original, which he maintains not being touched by anyone, and therefore showing hatred and disrespect with the family reflects negatively on the marital relationship.

- Spreading ridicule of people with disabilities and the poor:

Television drama makers often take advantage of people with physical disabilities, such as short stature, obesity, mentally retarded, or destitute, to make them an object of ridicule and make the audience laugh. This encourages people to adopt dangerous collective behaviour in dealing with this segment in real life, so it becomes natural for people with disabilities or the poor to be the subject of ridicule and laughter. In this case, it is a clear affront to human dignity, and it prevents such people from becoming positive and beneficial members of their society, and this may push them to depression or extremism and its dangerous consequences.

On the other hand, TV dramas often show people of poverty, destitution, and physical weakness in secondary roles that embody in them weakness, palliative, humiliation, and living on the side-lines of life, and in return push those with money, influence, and those with physical ability to the forefront of events and heroism. These embedded messages are problematically repetitive, as they instill in the societal imagination an accumulation of irony, a subconscious appreciation for money, the rich, and the powerful, and contempt for the poor and the weak,



whatever their orientations, and therefore dangerous cultural and behavioural repercussions on society.

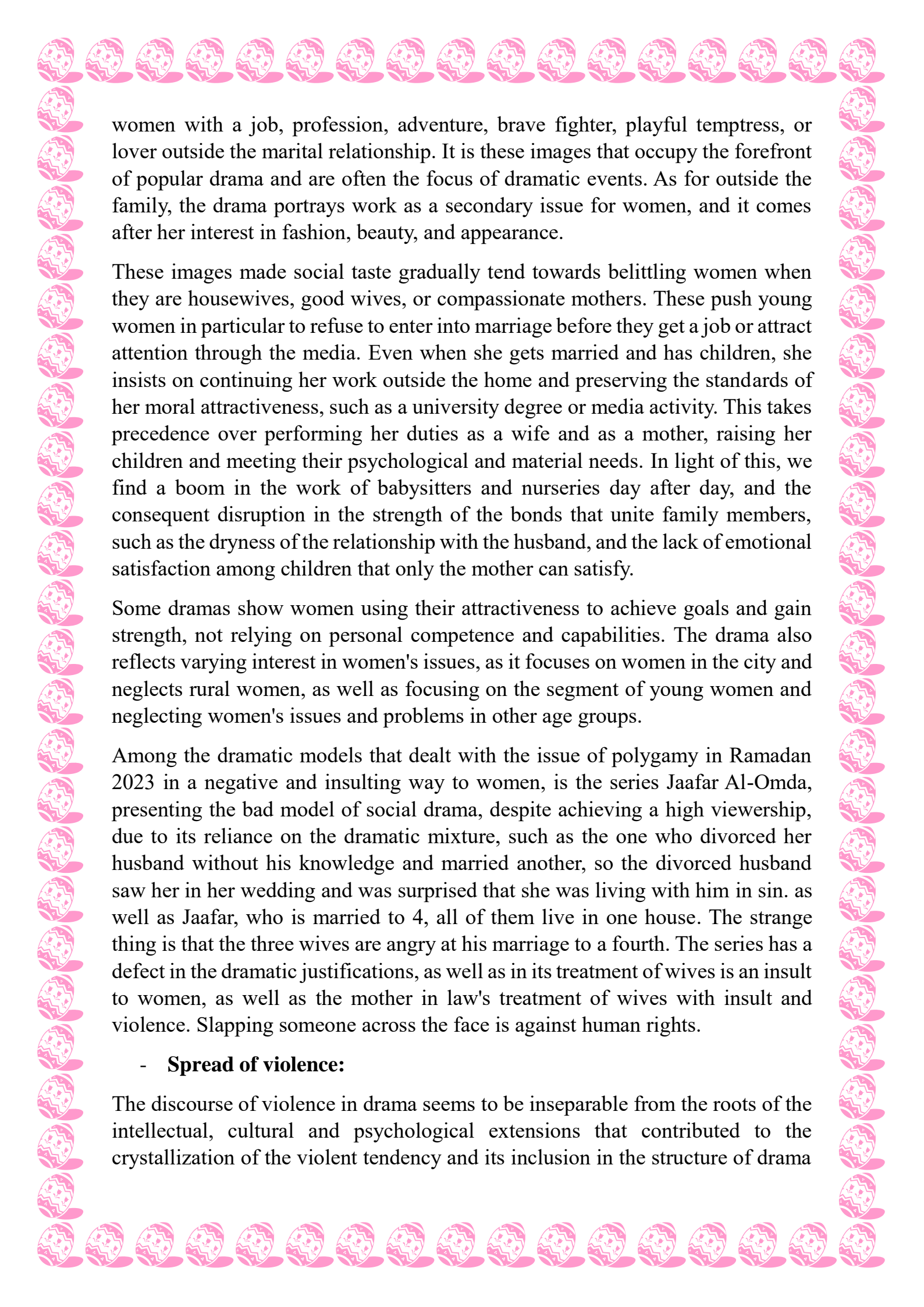
- **Distorting the image of women and their social role:**

Drama of all kinds is a major source for producing and reproducing the image of women and stereotyping them in people's minds, through their great ability to attract the audience, their wide spread, their attractiveness, and their seizure of people's time. What makes it the forefront of the channels that are important in creating or strengthening the image based on women is its ability to shape and convey meaning through the ways in which it organizes visual and verbal relations.

Thus, it is considered one of the sources of culture and the base on which mental human groups are built in terms of meanings, practices, or values. It also prepares images and ideas around which the social vision is formed. Its effect is also represented in that it creates a kind of formal environment between man and the real objective world. It provides modern man with an alternative reality in which he thinks, acts, and behaves, and becomes for him an alternative to the actual reality. Another thing that is of great importance in the image industry is its ability to provide a large balance of experiences and experiences about people, societies, and things that affect our interest. The flow of information works to create images, and these become a psychological filter through which reality is seen and interpreted.

Some researchers believe that drama is a microcosm of society and the distribution of power in it, and it operates under a specific ideology, which is the ideology of its owners, from which it feeds and nourishes, and reflects values and customs, as it is a carrier of its culture. Therefore, it can be said that the image presented to women in drama is an extension of their image in the cultural heritage. However, there is another group of researchers who believe that the role of drama does not depend on supporting what is existing or a tool for communicating ideology, but rather that it can generate a specific culture and draw ideology. The researchers believe that the media discourse contributes to the generation of general culture when it closes the circle and returns, albeit cumulatively, through a continuous and extended process, so that it becomes a medium.

One of the biggest dangers of TV drama is that it distorts the image of women in the societal culture, as drama often belittles women in traditional roles, whether within the family as the obedient wife, the committed mother, or the loyal housewife. On the other hand, roles of heroism and success are assigned to



women with a job, profession, adventure, brave fighter, playful temptress, or lover outside the marital relationship. It is these images that occupy the forefront of popular drama and are often the focus of dramatic events. As for outside the family, the drama portrays work as a secondary issue for women, and it comes after her interest in fashion, beauty, and appearance.


These images made social taste gradually tend towards belittling women when they are housewives, good wives, or compassionate mothers. These push young women in particular to refuse to enter into marriage before they get a job or attract attention through the media. Even when she gets married and has children, she insists on continuing her work outside the home and preserving the standards of her moral attractiveness, such as a university degree or media activity. This takes precedence over performing her duties as a wife and as a mother, raising her children and meeting their psychological and material needs. In light of this, we find a boom in the work of babysitters and nurseries day after day, and the consequent disruption in the strength of the bonds that unite family members, such as the dryness of the relationship with the husband, and the lack of emotional satisfaction among children that only the mother can satisfy.

Some dramas show women using their attractiveness to achieve goals and gain strength, not relying on personal competence and capabilities. The drama also reflects varying interest in women's issues, as it focuses on women in the city and neglects rural women, as well as focusing on the segment of young women and neglecting women's issues and problems in other age groups.

Among the dramatic models that dealt with the issue of polygamy in Ramadan 2023 in a negative and insulting way to women, is the series Jaafar Al-Omda, presenting the bad model of social drama, despite achieving a high viewership, due to its reliance on the dramatic mixture, such as the one who divorced her husband without his knowledge and married another, so the divorced husband saw her in her wedding and was surprised that she was living with him in sin. as well as Jaafar, who is married to 4, all of them live in one house. The strange thing is that the three wives are angry at his marriage to a fourth. The series has a defect in the dramatic justifications, as well as in its treatment of wives is an insult to women, as well as the mother in law's treatment of wives with insult and violence. Slapping someone across the face is against human rights.

- **Spread of violence:**

The discourse of violence in drama seems to be inseparable from the roots of the intellectual, cultural and psychological extensions that contributed to the crystallization of the violent tendency and its inclusion in the structure of drama

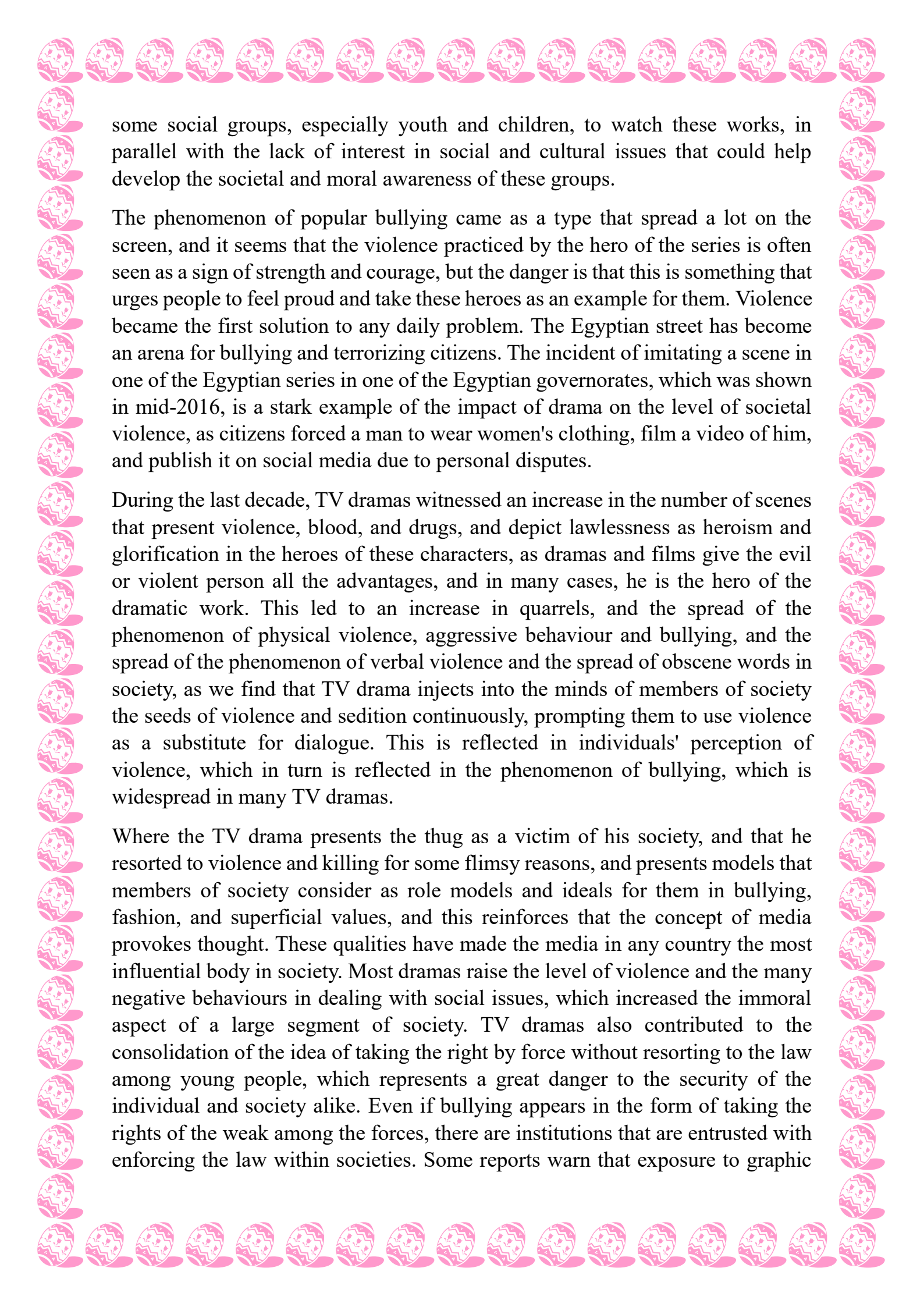


since the beginnings of the motion picture art. Specialists in cinematic channels believe that among the oldest and most rejuvenating cinematic films are crime films, because these films derive their mass appeal from multiple sources. Mythical proportions often fall directly under the superficial story, and we note that the quality of the film indicates the successive waves of each type of film over the period in which it appeared, as it reflects the development in the political and social climate in the country, and therefore the films of the 1930s reflect the economic crisis. Accordingly, the emergence of violent characters in drama becomes associated with the development of the political, social and economic climate, or as a result of ideological intellectual factors, such as the emergence of violent characters associated with terrorism.

As for the narrative patterns of the themes of violence in the cinematic film, it can be identified in the types of films of violence and crime. Perhaps the format of gangster films and outlaws is one of the narrative formulas that are characteristic of violence films that occupied a large area, especially in American cinema, which is considered a model in contemplating the issue of violence and crime over a period of time exceeding one hundred years, which is the age of cinematic art in general, whose first simple films were launched in dealing with topics of violence and crime. Over the past decade, Egyptian drama has been presenting different stories that revolve around topics related to marital infidelity, rape, drugs, perversion, and bullying, all of which show many scenes of violence.

The violent incidents taking place in many countries of the world, including some countries in the Middle East, some of which are very similar, sometimes to the extent of matching with a number of local and international dramatic scenes, raise a wide societal and artistic debate within those countries about the extent of the influence of drama on the phenomenon of verbal and physical violence within societies and the reasons for the exacerbation of this phenomenon during the recent period.

Many countries in the region have witnessed imitation of some violent incidents included in the drama shown on the screens of some media outlets, whether it is a local or international drama, in a way that has become clear dissatisfaction due to the low level of dramatic content, and those in charge of producing this type of drama sought to make quick profits, claiming that these works are highly popular, and their popularity in some societies outweighs the campaigns waged by critics and intellectuals against them. In other words, the intention of the producers of this type of drama is to shed light on issues of a criminal nature, such as drug trafficking, addiction, arms smuggling, and lawlessness, and to include in these acts the largest number of scenes of physical and verbal violence. It aims to attract

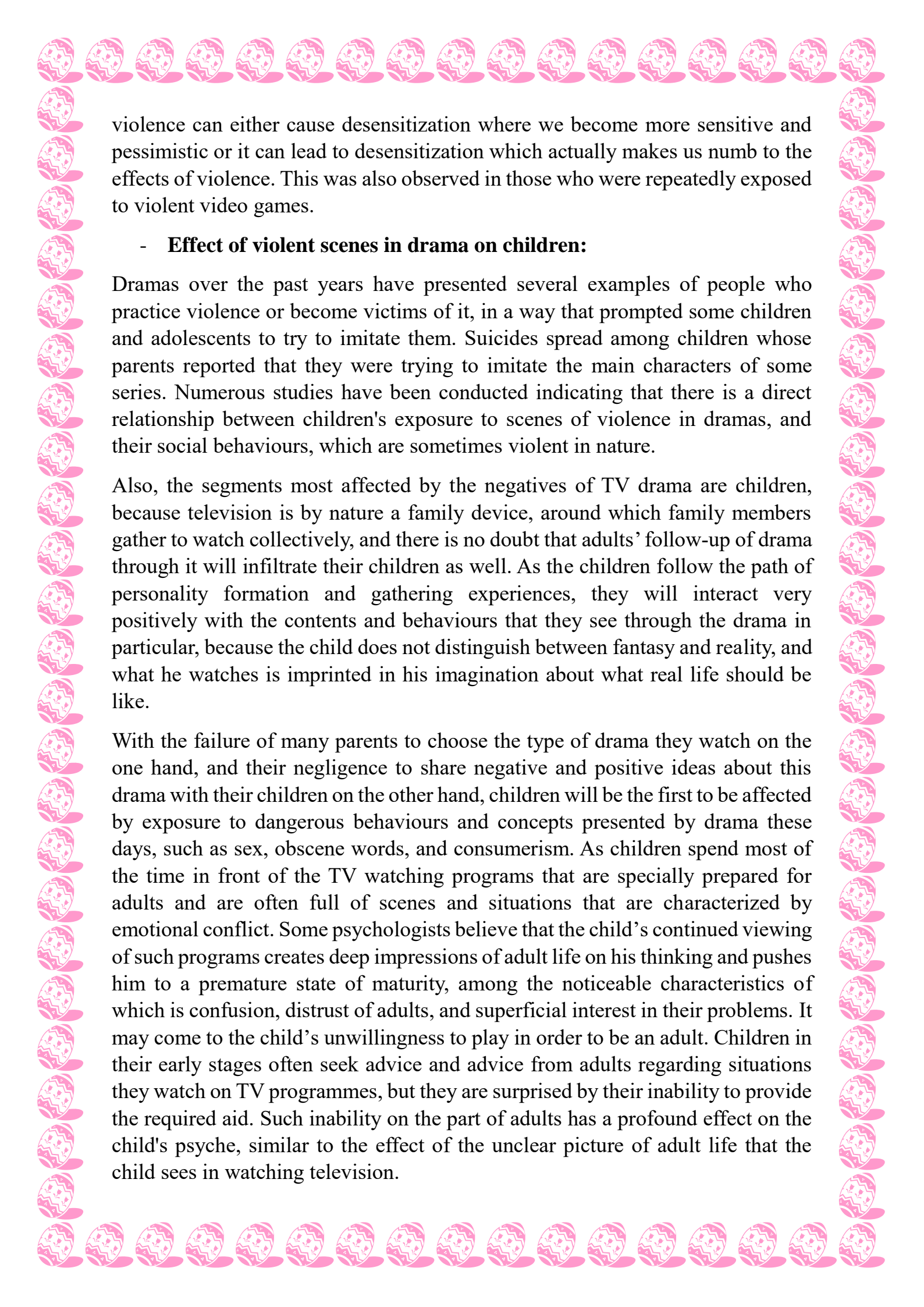


some social groups, especially youth and children, to watch these works, in parallel with the lack of interest in social and cultural issues that could help develop the societal and moral awareness of these groups.

The phenomenon of popular bullying came as a type that spread a lot on the screen, and it seems that the violence practiced by the hero of the series is often seen as a sign of strength and courage, but the danger is that this is something that urges people to feel proud and take these heroes as an example for them. Violence became the first solution to any daily problem. The Egyptian street has become an arena for bullying and terrorizing citizens. The incident of imitating a scene in one of the Egyptian series in one of the Egyptian governorates, which was shown in mid-2016, is a stark example of the impact of drama on the level of societal violence, as citizens forced a man to wear women's clothing, film a video of him, and publish it on social media due to personal disputes.

During the last decade, TV dramas witnessed an increase in the number of scenes that present violence, blood, and drugs, and depict lawlessness as heroism and glorification in the heroes of these characters, as dramas and films give the evil or violent person all the advantages, and in many cases, he is the hero of the dramatic work. This led to an increase in quarrels, and the spread of the phenomenon of physical violence, aggressive behaviour and bullying, and the spread of the phenomenon of verbal violence and the spread of obscene words in society, as we find that TV drama injects into the minds of members of society the seeds of violence and sedition continuously, prompting them to use violence as a substitute for dialogue. This is reflected in individuals' perception of violence, which in turn is reflected in the phenomenon of bullying, which is widespread in many TV dramas.

Where the TV drama presents the thug as a victim of his society, and that he resorted to violence and killing for some flimsy reasons, and presents models that members of society consider as role models and ideals for them in bullying, fashion, and superficial values, and this reinforces that the concept of media provokes thought. These qualities have made the media in any country the most influential body in society. Most dramas raise the level of violence and the many negative behaviours in dealing with social issues, which increased the immoral aspect of a large segment of society. TV dramas also contributed to the consolidation of the idea of taking the right by force without resorting to the law among young people, which represents a great danger to the security of the individual and society alike. Even if bullying appears in the form of taking the rights of the weak among the forces, there are institutions that are entrusted with enforcing the law within societies. Some reports warn that exposure to graphic



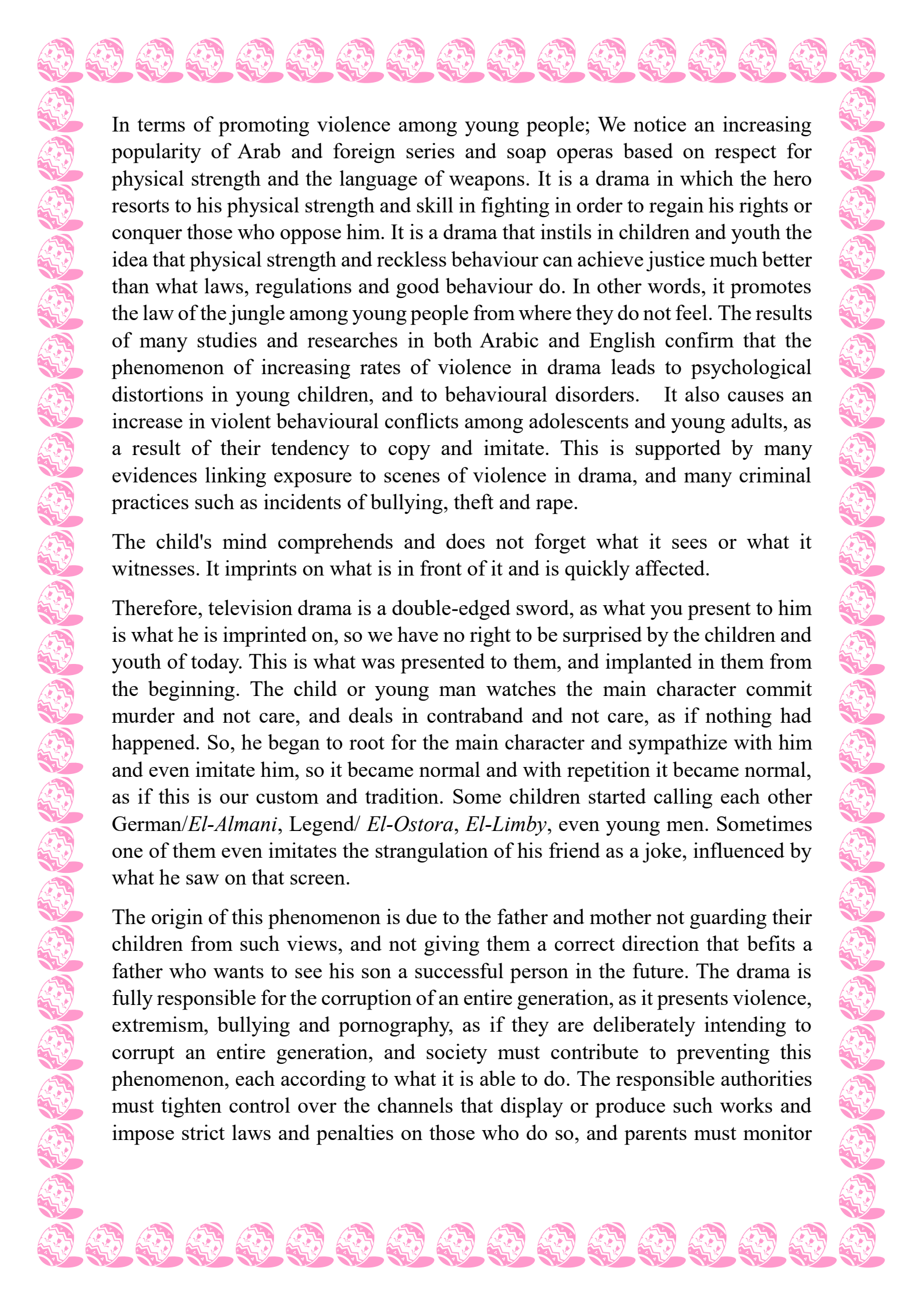
violence can either cause desensitization where we become more sensitive and pessimistic or it can lead to desensitization which actually makes us numb to the effects of violence. This was also observed in those who were repeatedly exposed to violent video games.

- **Effect of violent scenes in drama on children:**

Dramas over the past years have presented several examples of people who practice violence or become victims of it, in a way that prompted some children and adolescents to try to imitate them. Suicides spread among children whose parents reported that they were trying to imitate the main characters of some series. Numerous studies have been conducted indicating that there is a direct relationship between children's exposure to scenes of violence in dramas, and their social behaviours, which are sometimes violent in nature.

Also, the segments most affected by the negatives of TV drama are children, because television is by nature a family device, around which family members gather to watch collectively, and there is no doubt that adults' follow-up of drama through it will infiltrate their children as well. As the children follow the path of personality formation and gathering experiences, they will interact very positively with the contents and behaviours that they see through the drama in particular, because the child does not distinguish between fantasy and reality, and what he watches is imprinted in his imagination about what real life should be like.

With the failure of many parents to choose the type of drama they watch on the one hand, and their negligence to share negative and positive ideas about this drama with their children on the other hand, children will be the first to be affected by exposure to dangerous behaviours and concepts presented by drama these days, such as sex, obscene words, and consumerism. As children spend most of the time in front of the TV watching programs that are specially prepared for adults and are often full of scenes and situations that are characterized by emotional conflict. Some psychologists believe that the child's continued viewing of such programs creates deep impressions of adult life on his thinking and pushes him to a premature state of maturity, among the noticeable characteristics of which is confusion, distrust of adults, and superficial interest in their problems. It may come to the child's unwillingness to play in order to be an adult. Children in their early stages often seek advice and advice from adults regarding situations they watch on TV programmes, but they are surprised by their inability to provide the required aid. Such inability on the part of adults has a profound effect on the child's psyche, similar to the effect of the unclear picture of adult life that the child sees in watching television.

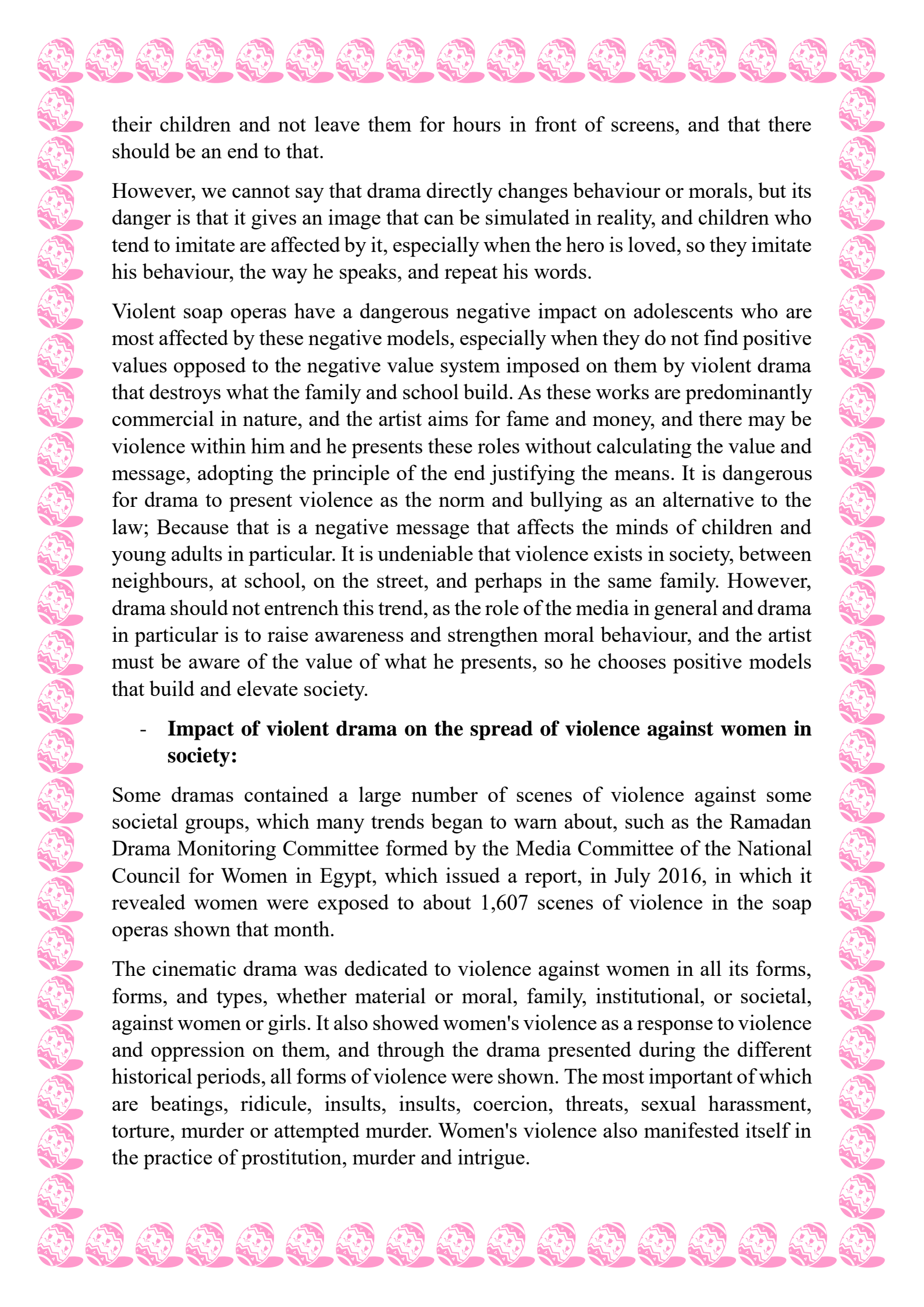


In terms of promoting violence among young people; We notice an increasing popularity of Arab and foreign series and soap operas based on respect for physical strength and the language of weapons. It is a drama in which the hero resorts to his physical strength and skill in fighting in order to regain his rights or conquer those who oppose him. It is a drama that instils in children and youth the idea that physical strength and reckless behaviour can achieve justice much better than what laws, regulations and good behaviour do. In other words, it promotes the law of the jungle among young people from where they do not feel. The results of many studies and researches in both Arabic and English confirm that the phenomenon of increasing rates of violence in drama leads to psychological distortions in young children, and to behavioural disorders. It also causes an increase in violent behavioural conflicts among adolescents and young adults, as a result of their tendency to copy and imitate. This is supported by many evidences linking exposure to scenes of violence in drama, and many criminal practices such as incidents of bullying, theft and rape.

The child's mind comprehends and does not forget what it sees or what it witnesses. It imprints on what is in front of it and is quickly affected.

Therefore, television drama is a double-edged sword, as what you present to him is what he is imprinted on, so we have no right to be surprised by the children and youth of today. This is what was presented to them, and implanted in them from the beginning. The child or young man watches the main character commit murder and not care, and deals in contraband and not care, as if nothing had happened. So, he began to root for the main character and sympathize with him and even imitate him, so it became normal and with repetition it became normal, as if this is our custom and tradition. Some children started calling each other German/*El-Almani*, Legend/ *El-Ostora*, *El-Limby*, even young men. Sometimes one of them even imitates the strangulation of his friend as a joke, influenced by what he saw on that screen.

The origin of this phenomenon is due to the father and mother not guarding their children from such views, and not giving them a correct direction that befits a father who wants to see his son a successful person in the future. The drama is fully responsible for the corruption of an entire generation, as it presents violence, extremism, bullying and pornography, as if they are deliberately intending to corrupt an entire generation, and society must contribute to preventing this phenomenon, each according to what it is able to do. The responsible authorities must tighten control over the channels that display or produce such works and impose strict laws and penalties on those who do so, and parents must monitor



their children and not leave them for hours in front of screens, and that there should be an end to that.

However, we cannot say that drama directly changes behaviour or morals, but its danger is that it gives an image that can be simulated in reality, and children who tend to imitate are affected by it, especially when the hero is loved, so they imitate his behaviour, the way he speaks, and repeat his words.

Violent soap operas have a dangerous negative impact on adolescents who are most affected by these negative models, especially when they do not find positive values opposed to the negative value system imposed on them by violent drama that destroys what the family and school build. As these works are predominantly commercial in nature, and the artist aims for fame and money, and there may be violence within him and he presents these roles without calculating the value and message, adopting the principle of the end justifying the means. It is dangerous for drama to present violence as the norm and bullying as an alternative to the law; Because that is a negative message that affects the minds of children and young adults in particular. It is undeniable that violence exists in society, between neighbours, at school, on the street, and perhaps in the same family. However, drama should not entrench this trend, as the role of the media in general and drama in particular is to raise awareness and strengthen moral behaviour, and the artist must be aware of the value of what he presents, so he chooses positive models that build and elevate society.

- **Impact of violent drama on the spread of violence against women in society:**

Some dramas contained a large number of scenes of violence against some societal groups, which many trends began to warn about, such as the Ramadan Drama Monitoring Committee formed by the Media Committee of the National Council for Women in Egypt, which issued a report, in July 2016, in which it revealed women were exposed to about 1,607 scenes of violence in the soap operas shown that month.

The cinematic drama was dedicated to violence against women in all its forms, forms, and types, whether material or moral, family, institutional, or societal, against women or girls. It also showed women's violence as a response to violence and oppression on them, and through the drama presented during the different historical periods, all forms of violence were shown. The most important of which are beatings, ridicule, insults, insults, coercion, threats, sexual harassment, torture, murder or attempted murder. Women's violence also manifested itself in the practice of prostitution, murder and intrigue.



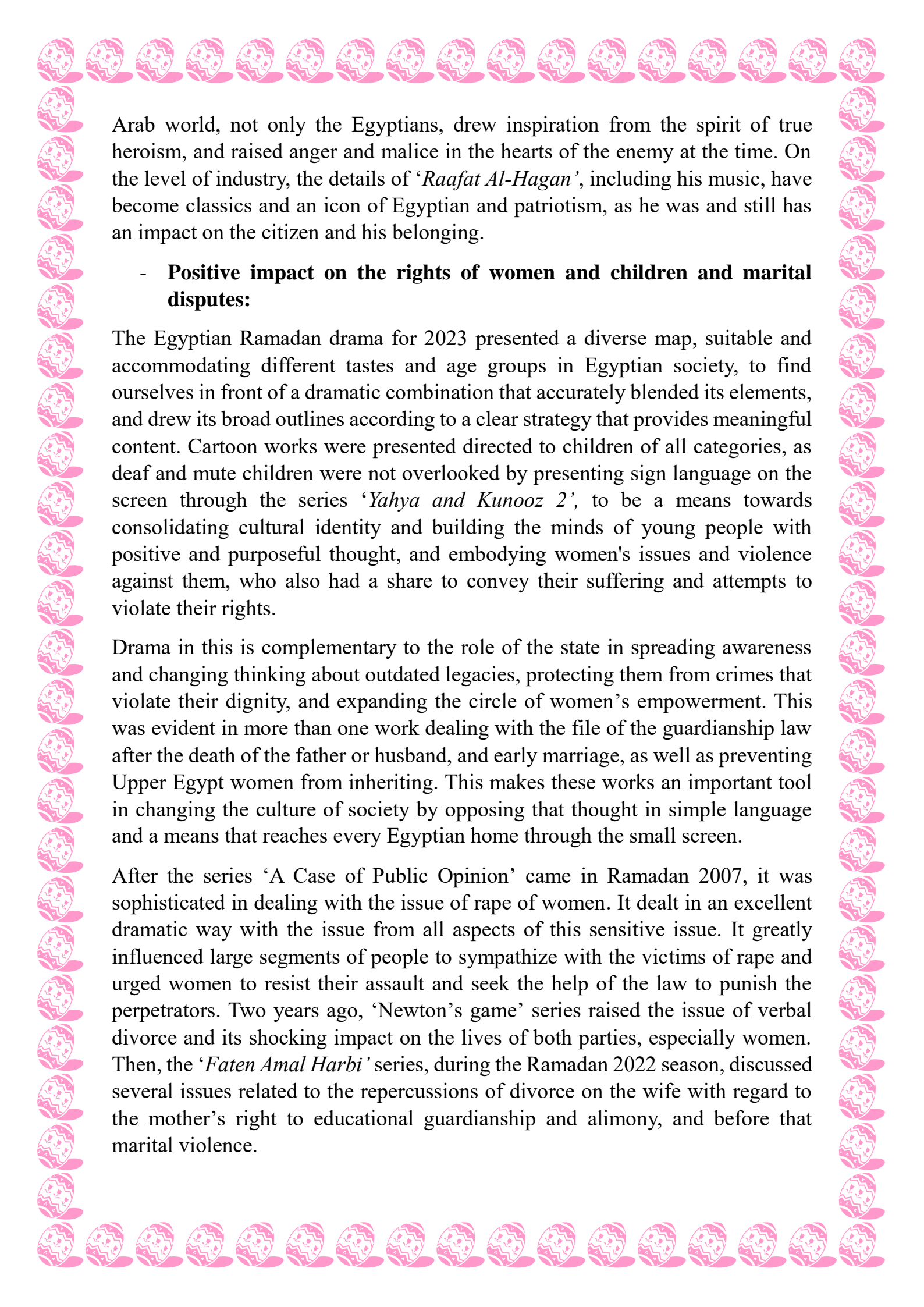
The Positive Impact of Drama on Human Rights

Despite the negative aspects, the TV drama has succeeded in many works in presenting human rights values in an honourable manner. It contributed to strengthening it, whether in the field of freedom of expression or the human right to life and work, and addressing violations of contemporary women's rights, raising awareness of the value of human rights, emphasizing equality and rejecting discrimination on the grounds of gender, religion, sect, or political belief, and supporting the national unity of citizens regardless of their differences.

- **Positive impact on preserving the national identity, raising the level of Egyptian national security:**

National security enjoys a number of its constituent elements, which, when fulfilled separately, provide security for the state with regard to its values, interests, and freedom to choose its policies. The different authorities list these elements in a different manner. Aspects related to politics, society, the environment, energy, natural resources, and economics are also commonly included. The elements of national security are closely linked to the concept of the elements of national power, in which soft powers, including television dramas, play a major role, because they address feelings, focus on values, and present ideal models in sacrifice for the sake of the country. As in the case of national power, the security aspect is important, but at the same time it is not the only component of national security, and until real security is achieved. The nation needs other forms of security that drama creates on the wing of the magic of the image, and from here the authorities differ according to the choices of each of them in determining the elements of the national security of the state. It is relied upon to preserve the image of the Egyptian drama and ensure the strength of its influence, achieving an aspect of improving public taste, shedding light on society with treatment and reform, and providing a good example, so that we understand that the series in particular, as the longest watched, are among the tools for maintaining cultural, social and intellectual security.

Drama plays an important role in fortifying society, so that successful work with the standards of strengthening the Egyptian identity becomes a purification of public thought from the impurities of corruption and corruption, and a confrontation with destructive ideas directed at the state with all its components, like bullets dipped in cyanide, if it does not kill by impact, it does with poison, in order to maintain internal public security and peace. Therefore, it is considered one of the Egyptian national security tools today. From the foregoing, we will find that these ingredients have coincided with some of the dramas in our history, such as the most famous and prominent series '*Raafat Al-Hagan*', from which the



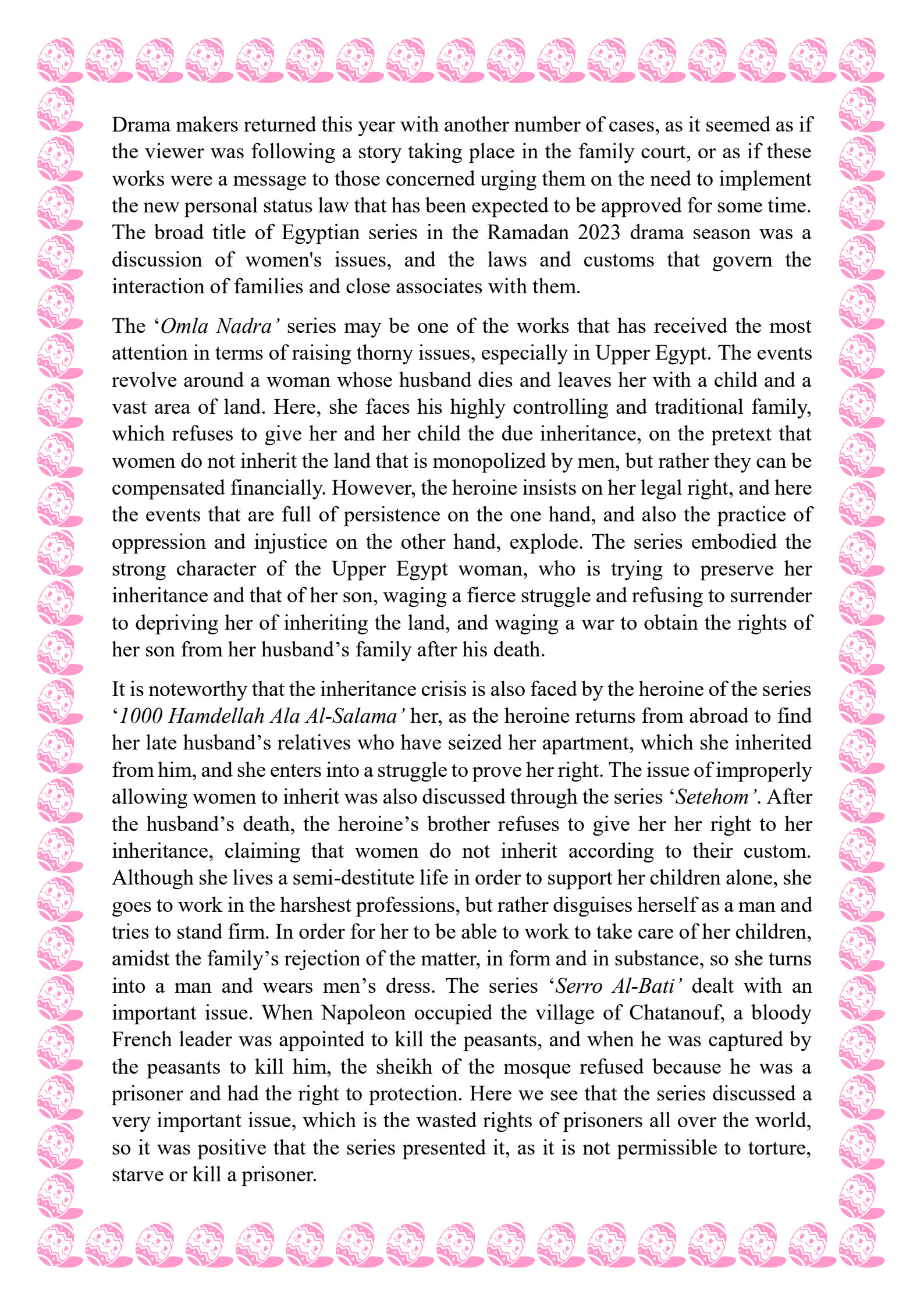
Arab world, not only the Egyptians, drew inspiration from the spirit of true heroism, and raised anger and malice in the hearts of the enemy at the time. On the level of industry, the details of ‘*Raafat Al-Hagan*’, including his music, have become classics and an icon of Egyptian and patriotism, as he was and still has an impact on the citizen and his belonging.

- **Positive impact on the rights of women and children and marital disputes:**

The Egyptian Ramadan drama for 2023 presented a diverse map, suitable and accommodating different tastes and age groups in Egyptian society, to find ourselves in front of a dramatic combination that accurately blended its elements, and drew its broad outlines according to a clear strategy that provides meaningful content. Cartoon works were presented directed to children of all categories, as deaf and mute children were not overlooked by presenting sign language on the screen through the series ‘*Yahya and Kunooz 2*’, to be a means towards consolidating cultural identity and building the minds of young people with positive and purposeful thought, and embodying women's issues and violence against them, who also had a share to convey their suffering and attempts to violate their rights.

Drama in this is complementary to the role of the state in spreading awareness and changing thinking about outdated legacies, protecting them from crimes that violate their dignity, and expanding the circle of women’s empowerment. This was evident in more than one work dealing with the file of the guardianship law after the death of the father or husband, and early marriage, as well as preventing Upper Egypt women from inheriting. This makes these works an important tool in changing the culture of society by opposing that thought in simple language and a means that reaches every Egyptian home through the small screen.

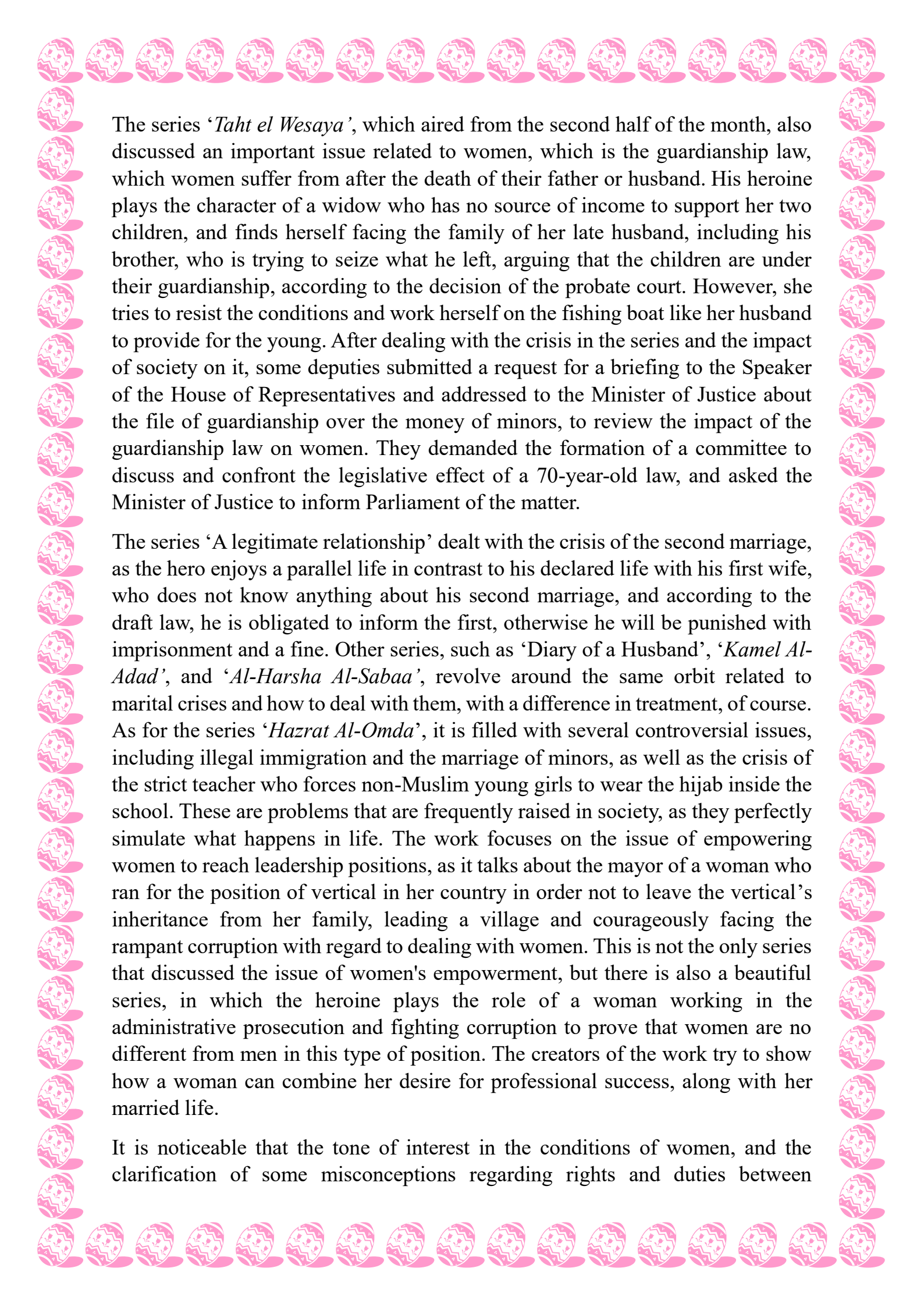
After the series ‘*A Case of Public Opinion*’ came in Ramadan 2007, it was sophisticated in dealing with the issue of rape of women. It dealt in an excellent dramatic way with the issue from all aspects of this sensitive issue. It greatly influenced large segments of people to sympathize with the victims of rape and urged women to resist their assault and seek the help of the law to punish the perpetrators. Two years ago, ‘*Newton’s game*’ series raised the issue of verbal divorce and its shocking impact on the lives of both parties, especially women. Then, the ‘*Faten Amal Harbi*’ series, during the Ramadan 2022 season, discussed several issues related to the repercussions of divorce on the wife with regard to the mother’s right to educational guardianship and alimony, and before that marital violence.



Drama makers returned this year with another number of cases, as it seemed as if the viewer was following a story taking place in the family court, or as if these works were a message to those concerned urging them on the need to implement the new personal status law that has been expected to be approved for some time. The broad title of Egyptian series in the Ramadan 2023 drama season was a discussion of women's issues, and the laws and customs that govern the interaction of families and close associates with them.

The '*Omla Nadra*' series may be one of the works that has received the most attention in terms of raising thorny issues, especially in Upper Egypt. The events revolve around a woman whose husband dies and leaves her with a child and a vast area of land. Here, she faces his highly controlling and traditional family, which refuses to give her and her child the due inheritance, on the pretext that women do not inherit the land that is monopolized by men, but rather they can be compensated financially. However, the heroine insists on her legal right, and here the events that are full of persistence on the one hand, and also the practice of oppression and injustice on the other hand, explode. The series embodied the strong character of the Upper Egypt woman, who is trying to preserve her inheritance and that of her son, waging a fierce struggle and refusing to surrender to depriving her of inheriting the land, and waging a war to obtain the rights of her son from her husband's family after his death.

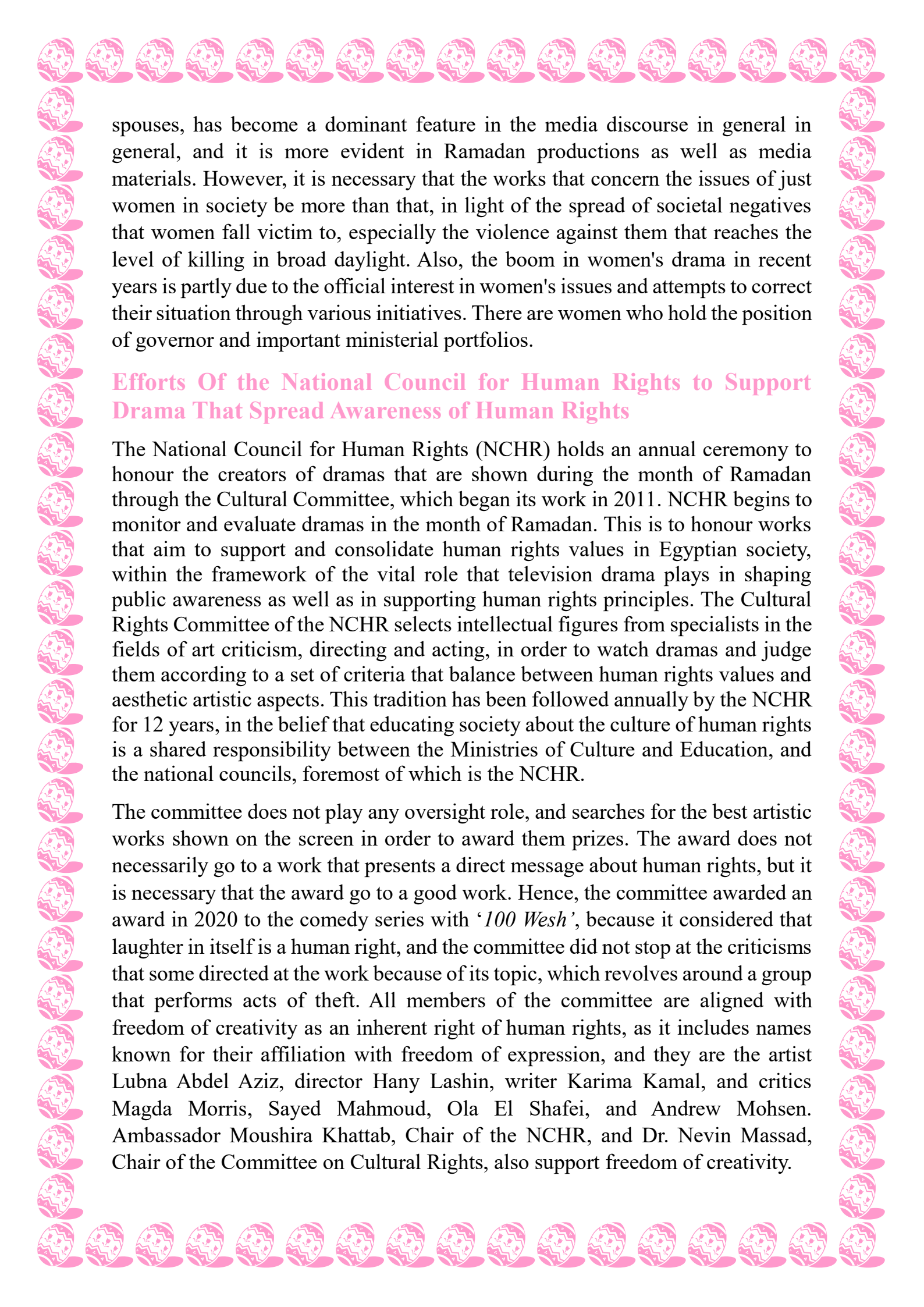
It is noteworthy that the inheritance crisis is also faced by the heroine of the series '*1000 Hamdallah Ala Al-Salama*' her, as the heroine returns from abroad to find her late husband's relatives who have seized her apartment, which she inherited from him, and she enters into a struggle to prove her right. The issue of improperly allowing women to inherit was also discussed through the series '*Setehom*'. After the husband's death, the heroine's brother refuses to give her her right to her inheritance, claiming that women do not inherit according to their custom. Although she lives a semi-destitute life in order to support her children alone, she goes to work in the harshest professions, but rather disguises herself as a man and tries to stand firm. In order for her to be able to work to take care of her children, amidst the family's rejection of the matter, in form and in substance, so she turns into a man and wears men's dress. The series '*Serro Al-Bati*' dealt with an important issue. When Napoleon occupied the village of Chatanouf, a bloody French leader was appointed to kill the peasants, and when he was captured by the peasants to kill him, the sheikh of the mosque refused because he was a prisoner and had the right to protection. Here we see that the series discussed a very important issue, which is the wasted rights of prisoners all over the world, so it was positive that the series presented it, as it is not permissible to torture, starve or kill a prisoner.



The series '*Taht el Wesaya*', which aired from the second half of the month, also discussed an important issue related to women, which is the guardianship law, which women suffer from after the death of their father or husband. His heroine plays the character of a widow who has no source of income to support her two children, and finds herself facing the family of her late husband, including his brother, who is trying to seize what he left, arguing that the children are under their guardianship, according to the decision of the probate court. However, she tries to resist the conditions and work herself on the fishing boat like her husband to provide for the young. After dealing with the crisis in the series and the impact of society on it, some deputies submitted a request for a briefing to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and addressed to the Minister of Justice about the file of guardianship over the money of minors, to review the impact of the guardianship law on women. They demanded the formation of a committee to discuss and confront the legislative effect of a 70-year-old law, and asked the Minister of Justice to inform Parliament of the matter.

The series 'A legitimate relationship' dealt with the crisis of the second marriage, as the hero enjoys a parallel life in contrast to his declared life with his first wife, who does not know anything about his second marriage, and according to the draft law, he is obligated to inform the first, otherwise he will be punished with imprisonment and a fine. Other series, such as 'Diary of a Husband', '*Kamel Al-Adad*', and '*Al-Harsha Al-Sabaa*', revolve around the same orbit related to marital crises and how to deal with them, with a difference in treatment, of course. As for the series '*Hazrat Al-Omda*', it is filled with several controversial issues, including illegal immigration and the marriage of minors, as well as the crisis of the strict teacher who forces non-Muslim young girls to wear the hijab inside the school. These are problems that are frequently raised in society, as they perfectly simulate what happens in life. The work focuses on the issue of empowering women to reach leadership positions, as it talks about the mayor of a woman who ran for the position of vertical in her country in order not to leave the vertical's inheritance from her family, leading a village and courageously facing the rampant corruption with regard to dealing with women. This is not the only series that discussed the issue of women's empowerment, but there is also a beautiful series, in which the heroine plays the role of a woman working in the administrative prosecution and fighting corruption to prove that women are no different from men in this type of position. The creators of the work try to show how a woman can combine her desire for professional success, along with her married life.

It is noticeable that the tone of interest in the conditions of women, and the clarification of some misconceptions regarding rights and duties between

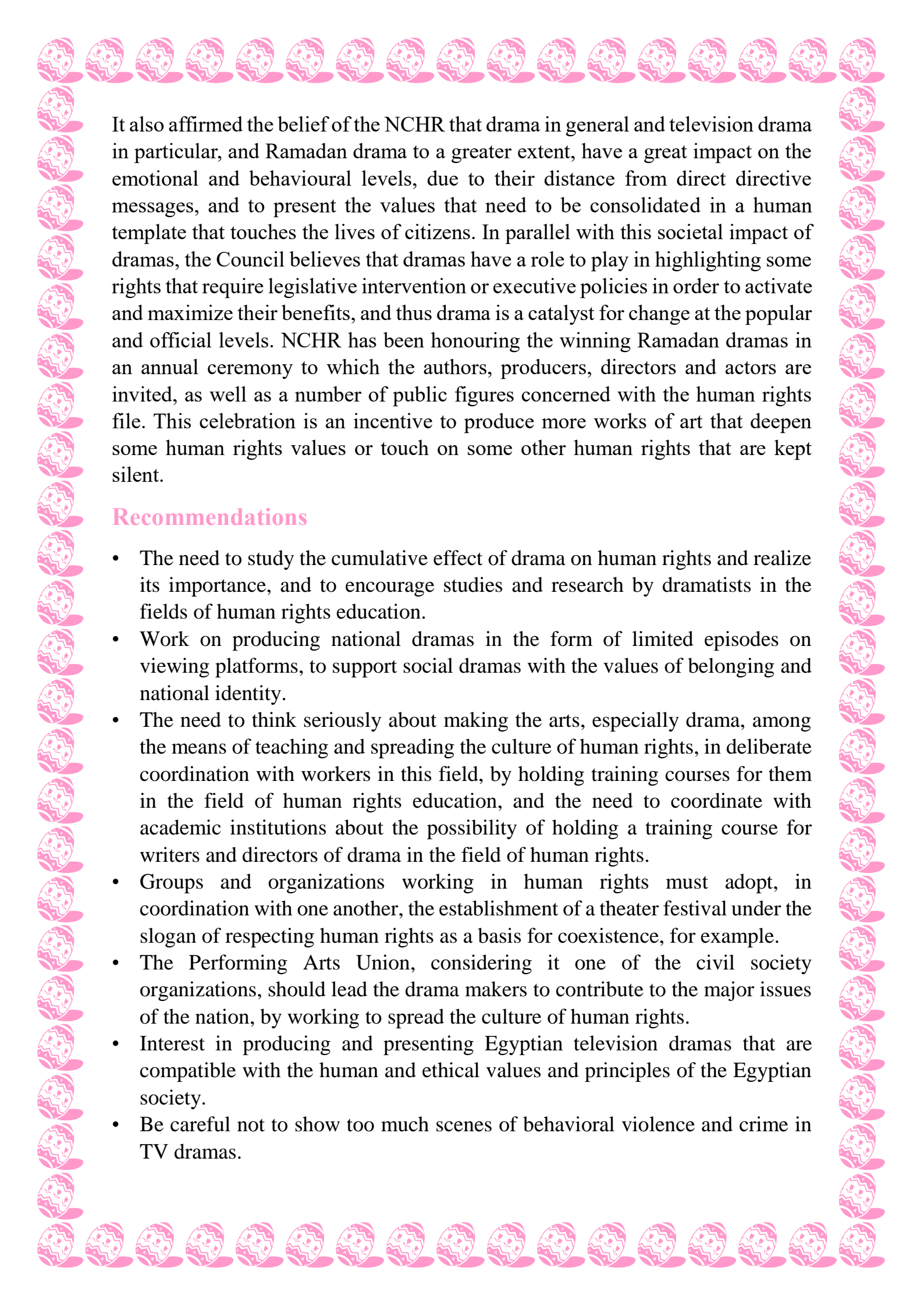


spouses, has become a dominant feature in the media discourse in general in general, and it is more evident in Ramadan productions as well as media materials. However, it is necessary that the works that concern the issues of just women in society be more than that, in light of the spread of societal negatives that women fall victim to, especially the violence against them that reaches the level of killing in broad daylight. Also, the boom in women's drama in recent years is partly due to the official interest in women's issues and attempts to correct their situation through various initiatives. There are women who hold the position of governor and important ministerial portfolios.

Efforts Of the National Council for Human Rights to Support Drama That Spread Awareness of Human Rights

The National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) holds an annual ceremony to honour the creators of dramas that are shown during the month of Ramadan through the Cultural Committee, which began its work in 2011. NCHR begins to monitor and evaluate dramas in the month of Ramadan. This is to honour works that aim to support and consolidate human rights values in Egyptian society, within the framework of the vital role that television drama plays in shaping public awareness as well as in supporting human rights principles. The Cultural Rights Committee of the NCHR selects intellectual figures from specialists in the fields of art criticism, directing and acting, in order to watch dramas and judge them according to a set of criteria that balance between human rights values and aesthetic artistic aspects. This tradition has been followed annually by the NCHR for 12 years, in the belief that educating society about the culture of human rights is a shared responsibility between the Ministries of Culture and Education, and the national councils, foremost of which is the NCHR.

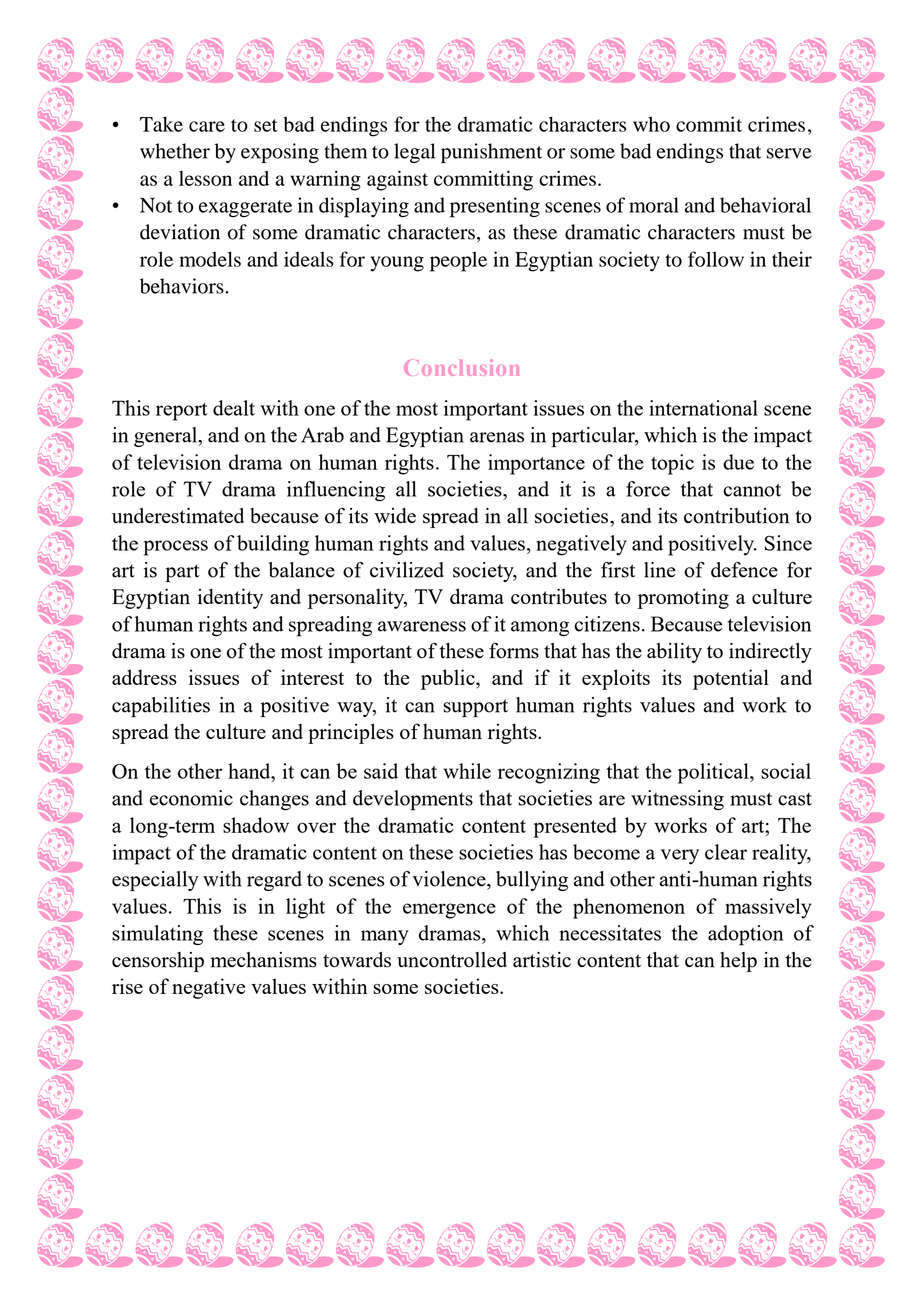
The committee does not play any oversight role, and searches for the best artistic works shown on the screen in order to award them prizes. The award does not necessarily go to a work that presents a direct message about human rights, but it is necessary that the award go to a good work. Hence, the committee awarded an award in 2020 to the comedy series with '*100 Wesh*', because it considered that laughter in itself is a human right, and the committee did not stop at the criticisms that some directed at the work because of its topic, which revolves around a group that performs acts of theft. All members of the committee are aligned with freedom of creativity as an inherent right of human rights, as it includes names known for their affiliation with freedom of expression, and they are the artist Lubna Abdel Aziz, director Hany Lashin, writer Karima Kamal, and critics Magda Morris, Sayed Mahmoud, Ola El Shafei, and Andrew Mohsen. Ambassador Moushira Khattab, Chair of the NCHR, and Dr. Nevin Massad, Chair of the Committee on Cultural Rights, also support freedom of creativity.



It also affirmed the belief of the NCHR that drama in general and television drama in particular, and Ramadan drama to a greater extent, have a great impact on the emotional and behavioural levels, due to their distance from direct directive messages, and to present the values that need to be consolidated in a human template that touches the lives of citizens. In parallel with this societal impact of dramas, the Council believes that dramas have a role to play in highlighting some rights that require legislative intervention or executive policies in order to activate and maximize their benefits, and thus drama is a catalyst for change at the popular and official levels. NCHR has been honouring the winning Ramadan dramas in an annual ceremony to which the authors, producers, directors and actors are invited, as well as a number of public figures concerned with the human rights file. This celebration is an incentive to produce more works of art that deepen some human rights values or touch on some other human rights that are kept silent.

Recommendations

- The need to study the cumulative effect of drama on human rights and realize its importance, and to encourage studies and research by dramatists in the fields of human rights education.
- Work on producing national dramas in the form of limited episodes on viewing platforms, to support social dramas with the values of belonging and national identity.
- The need to think seriously about making the arts, especially drama, among the means of teaching and spreading the culture of human rights, in deliberate coordination with workers in this field, by holding training courses for them in the field of human rights education, and the need to coordinate with academic institutions about the possibility of holding a training course for writers and directors of drama in the field of human rights.
- Groups and organizations working in human rights must adopt, in coordination with one another, the establishment of a theater festival under the slogan of respecting human rights as a basis for coexistence, for example.
- The Performing Arts Union, considering it one of the civil society organizations, should lead the drama makers to contribute to the major issues of the nation, by working to spread the culture of human rights.
- Interest in producing and presenting Egyptian television dramas that are compatible with the human and ethical values and principles of the Egyptian society.
- Be careful not to show too much scenes of behavioral violence and crime in TV dramas.

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- Take care to set bad endings for the dramatic characters who commit crimes, whether by exposing them to legal punishment or some bad endings that serve as a lesson and a warning against committing crimes.
 - Not to exaggerate in displaying and presenting scenes of moral and behavioral deviation of some dramatic characters, as these dramatic characters must be role models and ideals for young people in Egyptian society to follow in their behaviors.

Conclusion

This report dealt with one of the most important issues on the international scene in general, and on the Arab and Egyptian arenas in particular, which is the impact of television drama on human rights. The importance of the topic is due to the role of TV drama influencing all societies, and it is a force that cannot be underestimated because of its wide spread in all societies, and its contribution to the process of building human rights and values, negatively and positively. Since art is part of the balance of civilized society, and the first line of defence for Egyptian identity and personality, TV drama contributes to promoting a culture of human rights and spreading awareness of it among citizens. Because television drama is one of the most important of these forms that has the ability to indirectly address issues of interest to the public, and if it exploits its potential and capabilities in a positive way, it can support human rights values and work to spread the culture and principles of human rights.

On the other hand, it can be said that while recognizing that the political, social and economic changes and developments that societies are witnessing must cast a long-term shadow over the dramatic content presented by works of art; The impact of the dramatic content on these societies has become a very clear reality, especially with regard to scenes of violence, bullying and other anti-human rights values. This is in light of the emergence of the phenomenon of massively simulating these scenes in many dramas, which necessitates the adoption of censorship mechanisms towards uncontrolled artistic content that can help in the rise of negative values within some societies.