

المرصد العربي  
للعلوم الاجتماعية

Arab Social  
Science Monitor  
Observatoire Arabe  
des Sciences Sociales

# Social Sciences in the Arab World

## Forms of Presence





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**2015**



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## Preface

It is with a considerable sense of achievement that the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS) debuts the first Arab Social Science Report (ASSR). The series of Reports are planned as the major publication to be produced biennially by the ACSS through its project entitled the Arab Social Science Monitor (ASSM). The ASSM is a permanent observatory dedicated to surveying the landscape and assessing the trajectory of social science research in Arab countries.

The ACSS is a young institution which commenced operations out of Beirut, Lebanon in August 2012 with the aim of promoting and supporting the social sciences throughout the 22 countries of the Arab Region by providing funding, training, mentorship, publications and networking opportunities. The terrain of higher education and research has been changing rapidly across the Arab region, especially since the 1990s and developing in different directions. The infrastructure as well as the opportunity structure for the social sciences may still leave a great deal to be desired in the region, but they are sufficiently complex and varied so that neither the existing research capacity nor the major trends and characteristics of the knowledge produced, nor societal needs for the social sciences can be captured by

the conventional wisdoms which has informed knowledge institutions and programs, even in the recent past. The waves of unrest, conflict and war that characterize the region in the present moment makes this rethinking of trends, needs and priorities more, rather than less, important.

The idea of the Social Science Monitor arose out of the daily questions facing the ACSS as it began to design its first programs: What are the needs of different generations of social scientists across the region? Who are the target recipients for ACSS programs and opportunities? Who are the target audiences and consumers of the knowledge that would be produced? How many applications should a competition ideally receive and from which disciplines and locations to be assured that it has reached a broad spectrum of the research community? What other sources of funding, training and networking exist in the region? Where and how should scarce resources be allocated most productively?

The programs and the activities of the ACSS began to supply some of the answers to these questions or at least showed some recognizable patterns in the applications for funding, for membership, for participation in the conferences and

so on. The need for a systematic and rigorous documentation and analysis of the state of the social sciences still was apparent. Also clear was that such a project would have to extend into sister disciplines, look at a wide variety of institutions and understand the state of higher education and the university in the broadest sense. Discussion and consultations with partners and other institutions showed that such information and analysis would be of interest to a broad set of actors in the research and development fields.

It was with these ambitions that the Arab Social Science Monitor project of the ACSS was launched, staff assigned, committees formed and consultants hired starting in Fall 2013. The first 15 months (till March 2015) were considered as the pilot phase of the program, and focused on developing the framework, main concepts and tools for data gathering, documentation, analysis and sharing/dissemination. As the methodology appendix of this Report details, the areas of investigation were divided into five components and two main tools were developed and piloted in this phase – a Matrix for capturing information on the institutional infrastructures and a Questionnaire designed for individual social scientists.

This first Report reflects and builds upon the pilot phase of data gathering, but also goes beyond it. It is presented as a “Framing

Report” that lays out the landscape of inquiry for a broad understanding of the social sciences in the region. The preliminary investigation of the various spheres in which the social sciences in the Arab region present themselves and are represented, for different purposes and audiences, raises important and new research questions. The author of the Report, Dr. Mohammed Bamyeh, brings his considerable experience in the social sciences generally and in the Arab Region particularly to frame a series of arenas for future investigation concerning the infrastructure and fields of knowledge production and dissemination in the social sciences in the Arab Region. This ambitious research agenda will inform the work of the Arab Social Science Monitor in the coming phases and hopefully will also inspire other researchers and research institutions to become interested in undertaking similar research. We also hope that relevant national and international policy and development organizations will find much in this report to inform their work in knowledge production, higher education and research for development.

The pilot phase of the ASSM has sharpened our ideas while expanding our ambitions and also brought us face to face with the staggering scarcity of publically available data on the areas being investigated. While the data presented in this Report has been checked against the available sources of information, yet

much work still has to be done to validate the information and to go beyond the surface of what has been gathered. We hope that the Monitor as a data depository that will be made publically available will grow to fill a significant gap in the region and we also hope that we will collaborate with similar efforts and also advocate for better structures and processes for data gathering and sharing in the various countries of the region.

The Report is the result of hard work and good ideas and inputs of a large number of people, whether ACSS staff, ACSS Board of Trustees, committee members, consultants, researchers, reviewers and editors. Dr. Mohammed Bamyeh deserves a special mention for having gone above and beyond the role of a "Lead Author" and for participating in every aspect of setting up the Monitor as well as producing the Report. We have an excellent structure in place, a realistic though ambitious six-year plan and look forward to the next phase of expanded data gathering and institutional collaborations as well as critical discussions of the first Arab Social Science Report.

I hope that you will enjoy reading this Report. Please visit our ASSM webpage [www.theacss.org/pages/assm](http://www.theacss.org/pages/assm) which we are developing as an important vehicle for sharing our experiences and data and for soliciting comments and feedback.

**Seteney Shami**  
**Director-General, ACSS**  
**Beirut**



# Introduction

The first report's objective is to monitor the presence of social sciences in the different academic and public spheres in the Arab world. This includes universities, research centers, scholarly and cultural periodicals, civil society, and public media. Therefore, the report presents a general survey of the presence of social sciences and evaluates the abilities and characteristics of their disciplines in the region, with an eye to the significant transformations Arab societies have lately witnessed. The report aims to serve as both a practical and theoretical tool for parties interested in the support of social sciences and their development in the Arab world, including social science scholars, officials from research centers, universities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), sponsors of social research and development, and all intellectual and cultural actors interested in the role of the social sciences in the public domain.

**Consequently, we found it appropriate to focus on the traditional disciplines within social sciences, including political science, anthropology, sociology, economics, history, and psychology. We did also take into account interdisciplinary fields that employ social sciences, such as**

**gender studies, urban studies, and cultural studies.** Overall, we wanted to shed more light on knowledge production in the Arab region, particularly by exploring the presence of social sciences within various domains, including the public sphere. Our goal is to lay the foundation that will facilitate the production of other future reports relating the various aspects of social sciences in the Arab world, their problems, and their achievements.

The importance of this survey springs from the importance of the social sciences themselves for analyzing and understanding the surrounding reality, and connecting it to various local and global influences. A scientific understanding of any reality seems to gain more urgency in periods witnessing changes great enough to call for a more creative and comprehensive knowledge and a deeper look than had been necessary for a preceding era of apparent stability. The history of social sciences shows that their growth has been closely connected to general and radical social change. Like all other modern disciplines, the social sciences began to take their present shape in Western industrial countries during the first phases of the Industrial Revolution, and in

conjunction with urban growth, the emergence of new kinds of social problems, modern social formations, and new patterns of thought. All these developments also added momentum to processes of contact and cultural exchange through various means, including colonial expansion. It was only natural for the social sciences to eventually proliferate all over the world, especially in countries that saw parallel or analogous transformations, in spite of other differences.

Over time, the social sciences grew steadily in both quality and quantity in different parts of the world, especially since the latter half of the 20th century. This growth was commensurate with the requirements of studying modern societies that seemed to be constantly transforming, sometimes in the direction of emancipatory hopes that included popular participation in determining collective futures, improving the conditions of society's most marginalized populations, decreasing inequalities within and between societies, and extending the scope of human and civil rights. But the modern transformations also included disastrous tendencies, such as the increased destructive capacities of conflicts, especially in the case of modern wars, and exacerbated social conflicts that led to civil war in some societies or to the paralysis of political life. The disastrous tendencies of modernity also included authoritarian attempts to engineer social change without taking into consideration the effects

or opinions of the victims of this change or the myriad social and environmental problems associated with this style of development. A quantitative assessment reveals that the social sciences have witnessed great growth in their number of students, researchers, published studies, university faculties, research institutions, and professional societies throughout the world. A qualitative assessment reveals that the same period saw an ever-increasing depth in specialization, the emergence of new research methods, a broader range of theoretical diversity, and the application of some approaches and theories in some government policies and civil society initiatives. At the same time, the social sciences came to play a role in public debates and discussions, constituting an attempt to introduce a more scientific view into processes of public opinion formation.

Social sciences are rooted in one fundamental assumption: that social reality can be understood scientifically. Understanding a reality "scientifically" usually means observing it from enough distance to permit the researcher to shed preconceived notions, study hypotheses with greater objectivity, analyze reality with the aid of verifiable data, and generally maintain a critical spirit. Some of these requirements may not seem easily applicable to the social sciences. More often than not researchers study a society of which they are personally a part of, or else another society, whether historical or

contemporary, for reasons having to do with the biographical or intellectual formation of the researcher. Nevertheless, despite the fact that a social science practitioner is a human studying other humans, the drive towards a scientific understanding of reality reflects the fact that such a "reality" itself has increasingly become too complicated to fit into the interpretative possibilities provided by preconceived knowledge. The most important achievements of the social sciences crystallized, out of observations of one reality or another, from a distance that enabled the researcher to free themselves from preconceived opinions, simplistic ideologies and one-sidedness, thus paving the way for innovative discoveries through creative methodologies and a mind open to a broad range of interpretive possibilities.

The institutionalization of the social sciences in the Arab world can be traced to the first half of the twentieth century, with the founding of specialized academic departments in Egypt, the Arab Maghreb, Lebanon, and Iraq at the hands of researchers who had received their doctoral training in the West, particularly in French, American, and British universities. Today, Western academic institutions continue to play a pivotal role in generating Arab researchers and forming their scholarly perspective. We note, however, a discontinuity between different generations

of Arab researchers, whether in terms of research interests, approaches and methodologies, or Arab scholarly networks. This is notable especially as compared to the Western universities which shape the Arab scholars in the first place, where a collective academic memory makes each science appear as a culmination of cumulative past efforts. We can make a preliminary proposition regarding a factor that may be responsible for the weakness of Arab academic memory: the poor networking capacity of Arab social sciences, which we take note of in this report, and which is indicated by the absence of Arab scholarly societies in some cases or the lack of their regular activities and publications in others.

We can also postulate an explanation for weak Arab academic memory in the context of greater social phenomena within the Arab world. We refer to phenomena such as the erosion of connections between modern Arab societies as a whole and their formative heritage (or, at the very least, the replacement of the organic relationship to a past heritage with a rhetorical one). Despite this proposition, it is not difficult for us to find Arab academic societies that were active if not prosperous in previous stages. Keeping this perspective in mind, the relative weakness we see today in Arab academic memory and its networking capacities, especially since the end of the 1980s, does

not seem to be a permanent phenomenon. It may only be the result of the political developments that surround academic work, such as the wars and the long blockade in the case of Iraq; long periods of civil unrest in the cases of Lebanon and Algeria; or the ever-increasing control and censorship practiced by political authorities over all aspects of civic life in the Arab world in the period preceding the “Arab Spring” (and possibly following it). It is, however, also possible that this discontinuity with the scholarly past is the result of institutional developments, such as the tremendous boom in the number of Arab universities and research centers over the last three decades (which we will later document). This may seem like a healthy phenomenon, but in the absence of appropriate standards it may lead to the fragmentation of knowledge systems. This, in turn, either leads to the erosion of the standards of evaluation, or to relying on imported standards (such as the US News and World Report hierarchical ranking system) that may not be suitable for the local context or adaptable to it. We can also postulate that great institutional development in one area of the Arab world (such as the Gulf states) may lead to the evacuation of the local academic cadres in other Arab states-- although as we will see shortly, institutional development in the higher education sector encompasses all Arab states, including the ones with modest financial means.

## **The Universality of Social Sciences and the Characteristics of Local Contexts**

In our interviews with social science researchers in the Arab world, we encountered a common assumption that the quality of social sciences anywhere is closely associated with its links to global social sciences, whether in terms of location of study, possessing linguistic abilities, attendance of international academic conferences and forums, sustained exposure to significant results in other places, or other venues of scholarly communication. This point of view comes hand in hand with the firm belief that the quality of knowledge plummets in tandem with its degree of isolation from global social sciences. Nevertheless, it is also obvious that the local specificities of any location supply the research contexts and play a tremendously important role in determining research topics and approaches, and this is particularly true in the case of social sciences. It is well-known that a deeper perspective on a local reality can at times lead to theoretical findings of great significance to global social sciences (as in the case of the field work of Pierre Bourdieu in Algeria). Other examples combine precise observation of the dynamics of change with flexible use of theories, as in Hanna Batatu’s classic studies on Iraq and Syria, which have become indispensable references for scholars of modern Arab social history. In addition to the fact that the

local context influences the choice of research topics, that context also has ramifications for research methods, despite postulates about their universal nature. For instance, it became clear to the Iraqi pioneer sociologist Ali Al-Wardi that some formal research methods which require, say, recording interviews or filling out questionnaires, are highly unsuitable in a culture that is centered on direct relationships and that views all things "impersonal" or bureaucratic with suspicion. For this reason, Al-Wardi advocated adopting dialogue-centered methods, i.e. methods closer to traditional Arab social customs, when conducting field research in Arab societies. Attentiveness to social customs while choosing research methods gains a special importance in circumstances when security considerations override all others, as such circumstances may give rise to suspicion about the goals of those seeking information, including social science researchers conducting fieldwork or adopting any methodology requiring direct inquiry.

The issue of the thematic and methodological specificities of Arab social sciences was raised several times over the past decades (see: Hijazi et al, 1986), as was the issue of providing a local meaning for widely used concepts. An example of this came up in our interview for this report with Ahmad Baalbaki, a retired rural sociology researcher, where he criticized the use of the concept of "civil society" in the context of the

Arab world. For him, this term did not apply to the practices of many Arab associations subsumed under it, and especially those where the founder of an association remains its executive director for life. Baalbaki also criticized the adoption of the widely used concept of "participation," since it does not actually describe many of the cases to which it is applied. This is particularly true in development programs where a bureaucratic system uses the rhetoric of "participation" without actually allowing the local communities to shape those programs or to make any meaningful changes to them in a way that suits the local context according to the local understanding of it.

Furthermore, language of publication is a key concern in linking social sciences in the Arab world to global social sciences. Arab academic production is consolidated around three main languages: Arabic, English, and French, in a way directly tied to the colonial legacy of each country, the modern academic formation of its researchers, the work requirements in specific institutions, and the individual researcher's personal preference. Sari Hanafi discusses the issue of publication languages in one of his articles, where he proposes an equation: publication in foreign languages in exchange for losing relevance at the local level, or publication in Arabic in exchange for losing relevance at a global level (Hanafi, 2011). This issue has several ramifications that require serious

discussion, especially as it could be a matter of not only the language in which research is written, but also of producing forms of knowledge either foreign to or estranged from the society from which they emerge. In this connection, it would also be useful to make distinctions between works addressed to local scholarly communities, an Arab cultural community, or any other local audience, and works addressed to a foreign audience or scholarly group within a particular Western context, or to a local context shaped by continuity of colonial culture—or otherwise works such as policy studies that advise governments whose policies may flow out of the Western education of their managers. We also need to consider the extent to which research, regardless of its language, takes note of the local audience, that is to say, whether research treats the local audience as a mere recipient of its recommendations or knowledge, or as a participant in producing them. Add to this list of issues the researcher's personal hopes and expectations about audience interaction.

Finally, regarding issues of context, we must consider the role of general contemporary economic agendas that we have come to know as "neoliberalism," which surrounds social science work everywhere, including the Arab world, except in institutions armed with the will or the ability to resist it. Here we find trends that approach knowledge

and science as mere consumer markets like any other market, and views students as consumers and science as little more than a means for profit. In this connection it is no longer unusual for universities to be viewed as corporations rather than institutions with social, scientific, and civic goals that transcend a purely economic perspective. At this point, science must defend itself against these ubiquitous market trends by consolidating the concept of knowledge as a value in itself and a citizenship right, essential to the formation of a modern human who is present in their local and global realities with the greatest possible awareness. Knowledge, in this sense, would be a weapon against extremism and ignorance of the Other, as well as a tool for personal and societal liberation, and in ways that are not alien to the formative features of the global era and the local place of living. All this requires a broader understanding of knowledge that transcends market concepts and consumerist culture, including providing free or low-cost access to knowledge in all its forms, raising the standards of knowledge, deepening its contents, and diversifying its sources, from teaching to learned publications to databases to encyclopedias and other knowledge tools.

## The Social Sciences and Other Knowledge Cultures

Although in this report we define social sciences in a traditional manner

in order to facilitate monitoring them in a clear and comparative way, we must not forget an important fact. Social sciences interact with other domains of knowledge, including for example the natural sciences, literature, and cinematic production, that is, with any fields that contribute to a form of knowledge employable in the social sciences. This point of view does not of course mean that all those other domains consist more or less of social sciences under another denomination. It rather means that some knowledge-based projects originating from outside the framework of traditional social sciences may be of great importance to understanding specific problems in the social sciences. For example, we see today in the West that a medical/biological discipline such as neurology greatly depends on a social science such as psychology, although we see other methodologies within psychology, which still favor to study the environment surrounding the person and the use of classical psychoanalysis.

In the Arab context in particular there are deeply rooted relationships between the social sciences and intellectual culture. In this report, we document the presence of those relationships in cultural periodicals as well as in the cultural sections of the media. It should also be clear to anyone who is interested in Arab novels that many contemporary literary projects are of special

importance to the social sciences. In fact, many renowned literary figures either hold social science degrees or have produced significant outputs in these sciences. We may cite the examples of Halim Barakat, Abd Al-Kabir Al-Khatibi, Turki Al-Hamad, and many others. We also recall some Arab novelists' pivotal social science achievements, such as Ghassan Kanafani's sociological study of Palestine's 1936 Revolution. In this case, scientific knowledge emerges as the product of a particular interest in the trajectories of modern Arab reality, and not necessarily through the academic study of the social sciences.

Within the contemporary Arab literary scene, historical and realistic novels have increasingly taken up the task of presenting apparently detailed knowledge of the dynamics of social and political change in modern Arab realities, despite the novel being in itself, and by definition, neither science nor "truth". However, it presents a more comprehensive perspective, and often deeper knowledge, than deliberate academic studies that require, in contrast to literary works, scientific methodology and acceptable evidence, necessarily limiting them to a much narrower epistemic range than the one that a novel can digest. This approach does not, of course, mean that literature presents to us forms of knowledge superior to science or vice versa. Each field possesses

its own techniques, histories, and rules, and as such possesses epistemic value that the other field does not. But we may postulate that the epistemic value of each field should only become greater when its practitioners recognize the epistemic capabilities of another field, especially if both fields include concerns with the same topics, despite fundamental differences in methodology and ways of approaching those topics.

Obviously, in this study we do not approach the prosperous field of the realistic novel, and particularly the historical novel, as an alternative to the social sciences, but as a complementary form of knowledge. For instance, Abdul-Rahman Munif's pentalogy, *Mudun al-Milh* [Cities of Salt] presents an exhaustive description unparalleled in any historical or sociological academic study of psychological changes and patterns of social connection during a period of massive transformations in a specific Arab context. This description was complemented by another historical novel about the same context, called "*Sharq al-Wadi*" [East of the Valley] by Turki al-Hamad. We find the same literary attentiveness to exhaustive minutiae of the modern transformation of a country in another pentalogy related to Libya, "*Al-Khusuf*" [The Eclipse] by Ibrahim al-Koni. The same goes for Elias Khoury's "*Bab Al-Shams*" [Gate of the Sun] (about the Palestinian

Nakba) and Hammour Ziada's "*Shawq Al-Darwish*" [The Longing of the Dervish] (about the Mahdiyya Revolution in Sudan). The works of Naguib Mahfouz and Hanna Mina (despite their great ideological divergence) exhibit a high sense of sensitivity to local popular culture. The same sensitivity is encountered in works that combine popular culture with theses on the nature of politics, perhaps most notably the Egyptian writer Khairy Shalaby's trilogy "*al-Amali*" [The Hopes]. We can also cast light on several other literary endeavors, the worthiest of which is probably Ghassan Kanafani's "*Umm Saad*" which aimed at drawing the main features of the national personality, a matter ubiquitously present for a former and perhaps future generation of Arab social science researchers. At other times, as in Saud Alsan'ousi's novel: "*Saq al-Bambu*" [The Bamboo Stalk], we see the novel as a framework for studying social issues ignored (as we will see later) by local social sciences—in this case expatriate labor in the Gulf. Finally, the notion of "alienation," central to social sciences that study modernity and its discontents, is also central to countless modern literary endeavors.

The remarks above suggest that there are potential or actual relationships that promise significant rewards between modern social sciences and other epistemic cultures, including the humanities,



natural sciences, and the arts, including modern Arab cinema. This perspective does not necessarily mean that social sciences have to turn into a knowledge ensemble different in nature from the one we know today; it does however compel a necessity to pay attention to that part of the output of other fields of knowledge that is already positioned to communicate with social science concerns. This also requires encouraging interdisciplinary exchange in a manner that maintains the disciplines' scientific integrity whilst freeing them from the limitations of their own epistemic frameworks.

## Social Sciences and Society

The sessions we held with a number of Arab researchers to prepare this report made it clear to us that there is general dissatisfaction with what is called a "general atmosphere" in society that pulls an instructor or researcher into its mainstream current. This refers to prevalent beliefs in society such as sectarian thought or narrow ways of thinking about identity. Ultimately, this atmosphere may infect instruction or research so that these become merely other sources for the reproduction of preexistent social thought, rather than as means to transcend or critique it. Although we do not have sufficient indicators to measure just how widespread this phenomenon is (or is not), we reiterate the importance of

understanding the social sciences as a method of studying reality from a distance sufficient enough for the formation of a scientific perspective on it, rather than a perspective that merely reflects that reality. Here, it is worth noting that the notion of "sufficient distance" does encompass field studies that require immersion in a local context to understand it accurately, but not to the extent that the researcher is assimilated into this context in a manner that nullifies the very purpose of research and transforms the researcher into another product of that context.

This approach, naturally, does not mean that there is no place for researchers and teachers as individuals, or for the social sciences as an approach in change-oriented social phenomena, such as popular movements or civil society, or in other areas of civic life or policy-making institutions. As the study of social sciences in civil society in this report will show, the social sciences play a crucial role, particularly in terms of adding a scientific perspective to a social cause that is urgent enough to drive a group to organize around it. In this report we did not look into the relationship between the social sciences and policies (due to the immense complications facing such a study that in any case merits its own special report), but it is clear from other global experiences that sound policies embrace scientific

analyses. This does not mean that policies are always built “objectively”, in the narrow sense of the word. For example, in Germany there is an established tradition for each political party to have its own research institution supported by public funding. This institution is tasked with studying policies of interest to the party from its perspective and ideology, but in a manner that is freed from electoral calculations and daily political conflicts. This allows the resulting research to appear serious enough and communicable to an educated audience that does not coincide with the party’s ordinary constituency. In this case, despite the fact that the scientific production is organically linked to an ideological perspective, the research standards allow it to assume the appearance of “science” instead of a mere “ideology”.

## **This Report**

Since the role of the Monitor’s first report is to serve as a general framework for looking into the social sciences, and particularly as a guide to the issues to be addressed in later reports and activities, the team working on this report maintained that it should focus on monitoring “the presence” of the social sciences in all the different domains in which such a presence is possible. It should go without saying that this report serves as a preliminary framework to ground further studies and discussions.

As the focus is on presence, this entails lack of focus on other issues relating to the nature of the social sciences, although this report does provide basic references about this point in several domains.

By studying presence, we seek to explore possible strategies for enhancing the role of social sciences. Such strategies would ideally be produced by all those concerned with establishing a greater role for scientific thought in the making of the Arab future. The recommendations derived from this study contained in the conclusion of this report offer some suggestions to that end.

This report registers the existence of a significant untapped potential for the social sciences in the Arab world. It remains untapped due to a number of phenomena monitored in this report, including institutional fragmentation, lack of encouragement for research activities, political restrictions on them, the weakness of the Arab academic intellectual community, the bureaucratic inflexibility of Arab universities, and other factors. Despite these factors, we find in this report that we have witnessed tremendous institutional growth in the sciences in general in the Arab world over the last three decades. This includes the number of universities, faculties, research centers, scholarly and intellectual periodicals, and other depositories

of knowledge. This growth may be linked to other phenomena such as the quantitative growth of the youth population and of civil society. Therefore, we may consider this report itself a part of the phenomenon it studies, as we find ourselves facing a new generation of institutions still in the process of discovering each other.

**For the preparation of this report, we relied on (1) number of commissioned papers, each of which examined one of the arenas of the public sphere and civil society, (2) data and indices collected by the report team on universities, research centers, professional societies, and periodicals all over the Arab world, in addition to (3) a questionnaire sent to a sample of young Arab researchers. We also referred to previous studies prepared by specialists with expertise in the general characteristics of the social sciences in the region. For details, please refer to the Methods and Tools chapter (page 134).**

**The report is divided into two main parts. The first monitors the presence of social sciences in academic institutions including universities, research centers, professional societies, and scholarly periodicals. The second part monitors the presence of the social sciences in civil society and the public sphere, including intellectual and cultural magazines, newspapers, television, and popular magazines. It is worth mentioning that the addition of the public sphere and civil society to our monitoring endeavor aims to determine the extent to which scientific thought is present in society as a whole, in addition to its presence in the research and educational establishments that specialize in it.**

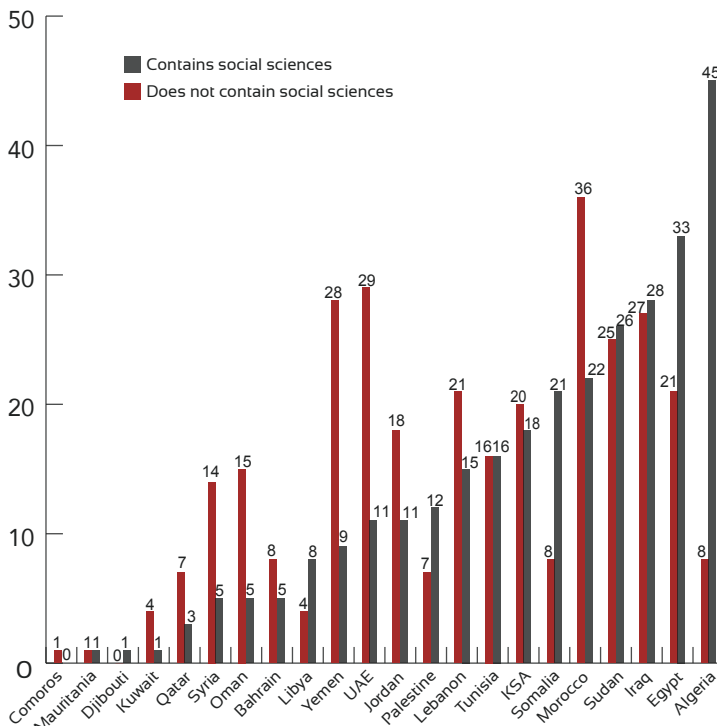
As a general conclusion, social sciences have a presence in all the various fields, but this presence varies in its forms, approaches, foci, and intensities. All these elements are covered in the subsequent chapters of this report.

# Institutional Frameworks

## Universities [1]

Although the social sciences have a natural home in modern higher education institutions alongside the natural sciences and vocational faculties, their actual presence in their traditional form is still limited to 48% of the universities in the Arab world. This may be due to the relatively young age of most of universities in the Arab world, since interest in the social sciences generally increases in universities with long academic histories, including ones established initially as vocational institutes.

Number of Universities Containing and Not Containing Social Sciences by Country\*



Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database  
 \* There is a total of 614 universities in the Arab region based on the definition below.

Figure 1

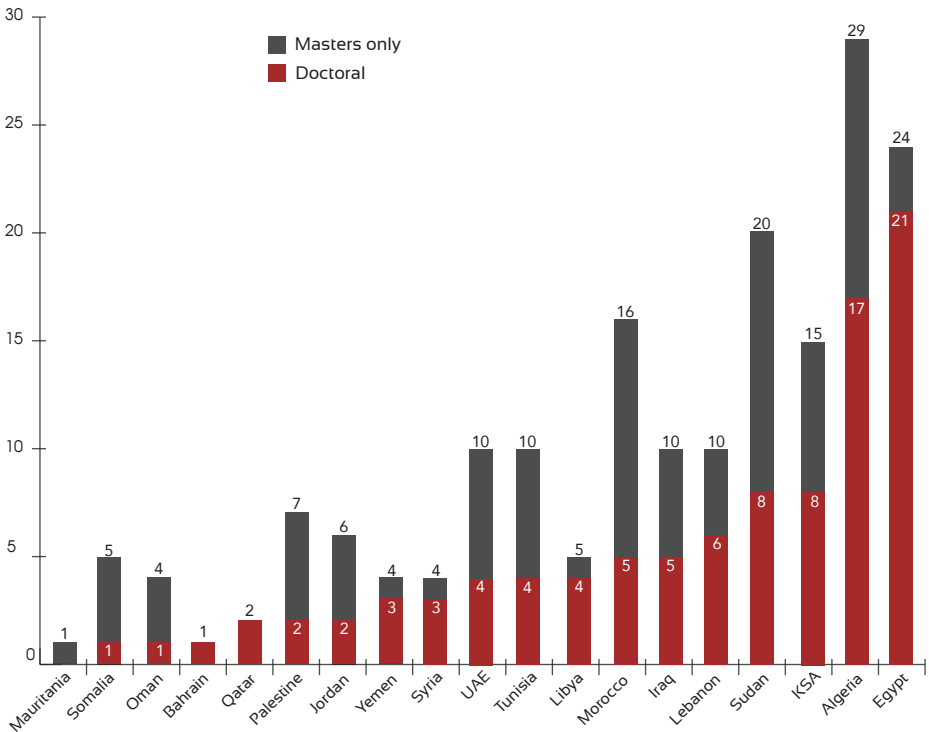
[1] Universities are defined as degree-granting institutions with 'university' in their name, and/or which offer at least a Bachelor's degree in two or more distinct fields, and/or which offer at least a Bachelor's degree in a social science field, and/or which offer a professional diploma in four years or more in two or more distinct fields, and/or which offer a professional diploma in four years or more in a social science field.

In countries with a relatively long history of university education such as Egypt, Iraq, Sudan, and Tunisia—but interestingly also Somalia—the proportion of universities offering social sciences in their traditional form exceeds 50%. There are many possible indicators for this level of social science presence, such as recognition of their role in the scientific formation of society, or finding room for them as a way of

imitating prestigious universities in the West, or introducing them as modernist experiments subject to change. Generally speaking, considering the relatively young age of most Arab universities (97% of the 597 universities we covered in this survey were established after 1950, and 70% of them did not exist in 1991) the level of social science presence seems acceptable to a certain extent.

## Number of Universities Granting Graduate Degrees (Masters and Doctoral) in Social Sciences by Country\*

Figure 2



**Source:** Arab Social Science Monitor database  
 \* Based on 296 universities granting degrees in at least one social science discipline.

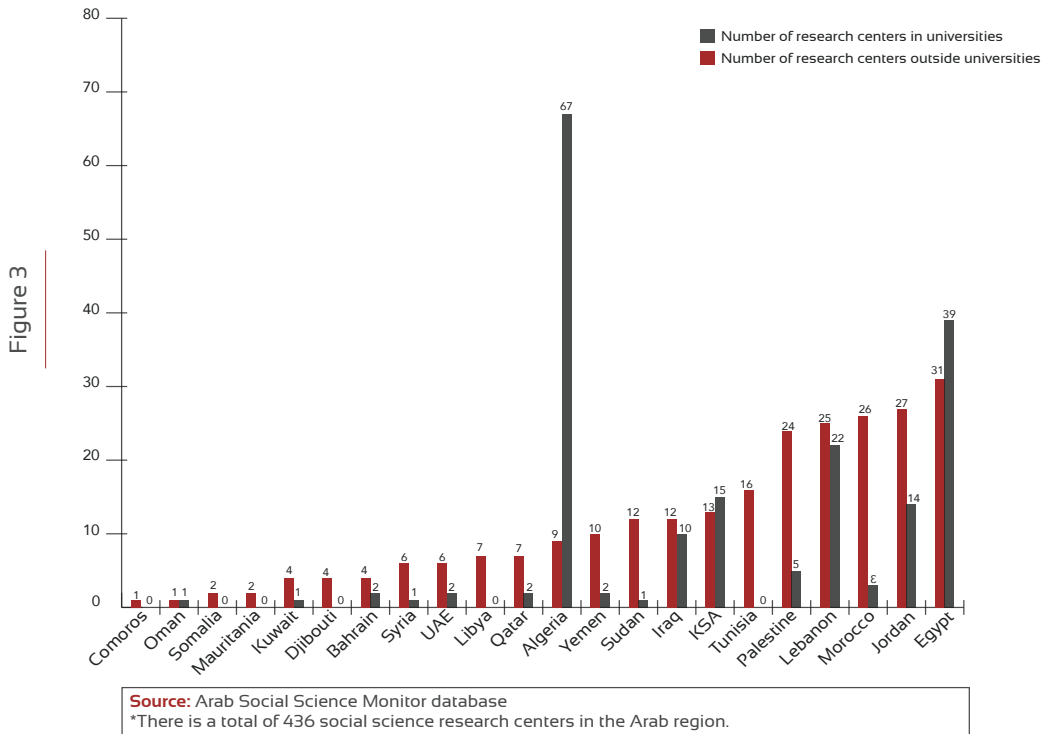
Figure 1 gives a basic idea of the presence of social sciences at the university level in general. Other indicators provide us with a more significant look into the depth of interest in the social sciences in universities. In looking for example at the presence of higher university degrees (Master's and PhDs) in the social sciences, it comes as no surprise that Egypt, a country with a long university tradition, is a frontrunner, with 21 universities offering a PhD degree in at least one social science. However, we also notice strong representation from countries whose universities did not initially seem to give social sciences too much emphasis. For example, in Algeria the interest in the social sciences is concentrated at the level of higher degrees. The same applies to Sudan, where there is long-standing graduate interest in anthropology in particular. Eighteen Arab countries have at least one university granting a PhD in at least one social science, while nineteen offer a Master's degree in at least one as well.

In addition, university research centers serve as another indicator of the level of importance given by Arab universities to the social sciences. We find great variation by country in this regard, with prevalence of these centers in a limited number of countries and their absence or scarcity in most Arab countries. If we assume that the presence of research centers in universities reflects a

direction towards enriching the relationship between the research aspect of social sciences and university curricula, then Algeria is a frontrunner in adopting this direction in the Arab world.

In addition to Algeria, we note a relatively significant presence of research institutions in the universities of Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Iraq. These six countries alone account for 89% of the university research centers in the Arab world, with Egypt and Algeria together containing more than half of these centers (57%). However, as we shall see later, there needs to be a more in-depth look into the phenomenon of research centers, a great number of which operate outside the university at rates that differ from one country to another. However, if we limit our focus for the moment to university research centers, we can infer that only a few countries, varied in terms of their wealth, have university-based research centers that have available to them the institutional infrastructure for research in the same university that would allow them to develop their capacities in a certain manner. This observation reflects here a claim we shall later discuss regarding the weakness of a causal relationship between the presence of social sciences and the overall wealth of a society. At any rate, we point out the total absence of university research centers in 6 countries, and the presence of only one in 4 others.

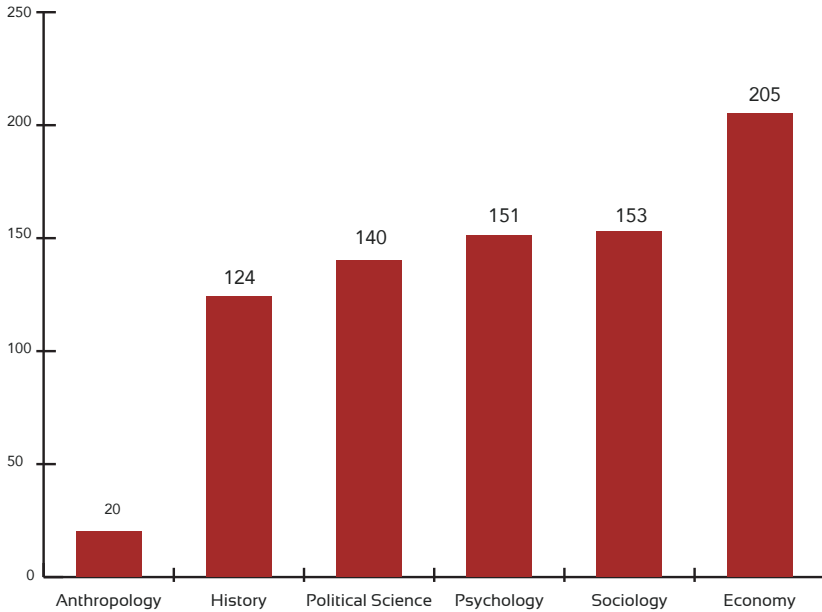
## Social Science Research Centers In and Outside Universities\*



A look into the disciplinary composition of social sciences in Arab universities reveals that economics is the frontrunner, comprising 26% of social science faculties, while anthropology does not exceed 2% of these faculties. We also confront an unexpected puzzle: in societies where questions of heritage and historical legacies—including the colonial era—are seen to have had deep impact socially, politically, and culturally, the social science most relevant to those topics, i.e. historical sciences, only accounts for 16% of the total faculties dedicated to social science.

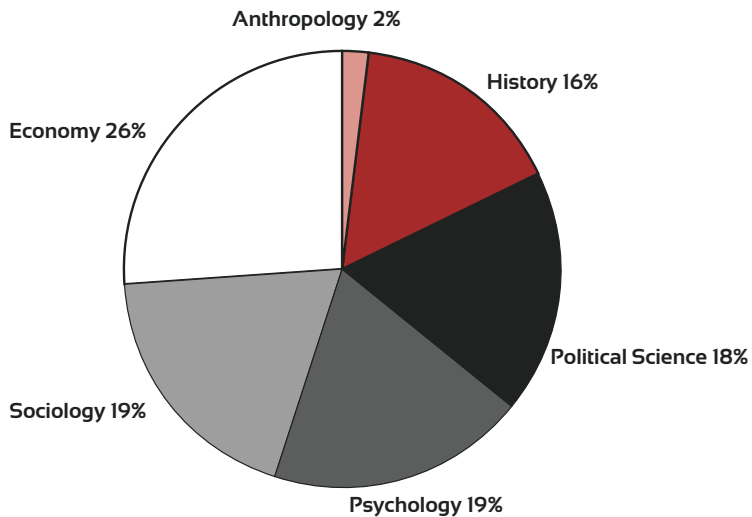
This means that the Arab university in general adhered to the belief that its main responsibility concerns matters considered to be at the heart of modernity and modernization. This explains the powerful presence of economics, a promising discipline in a socio-political system speaking the language of growth and development. On the other hand, the lack of interest in disciplines such as anthropology carries great implications for understanding what is considered “traditional”, a theme that resonates with significant social segments, including the ones encountering

## Number of Social Science Faculties by Discipline\*



**Source:** Arab Social Science Monitor database  
 \* Based on 793 faculties in 296 universities containing social sciences.

## Percent Distribution of Disciplines in Social Science Faculties



**Source:** Arab Social Science Monitor database

Figure 4

Figure 5



social change. The other surprise that emerges in this connection is the relative weakness of political science presence in a region consumed by political concerns at all levels, and where political issues have daily resonance. One would then expect political sciences to be more prominent, not just for providing standards for the analysis of available options and for a scientific appraisal of political reality, but also for understanding prevalent terms that are usually treated as self-evident and are thus in need of no science to explain them. Such terms include, for example, “political Islamism”, “liberalism”, “revolution”, and “nation”. Those percentages of presence may indicate a postulate: issues that are common in ordinary social life—such as traditions, political conversation, exemplary use of history, and so on—may seem under certain conditions to be unsuitable as the object of scientific study. This is either because they are considered self-evident and thus a property of a common public, or because certain restrictions restrain the university from introducing sciences relating to widely circulated topics into its studies.

## **Continuity and Discontinuity across Generations: Initial Remarks**

The quick growth of universities anywhere in the world carries with it a number of dilemmas. Most notably, there are the issues of: maintaining acceptable standards of research and instruction, the academic formation of new generations mostly

from social segments introduced to higher education fairly recently, and preserving previous research achievements and traditions in light of the assimilation of a great number of new instructors with varying academic formations into burgeoning universities. In various studies, we find scathing criticisms of the competence of Arab universities in general. The Arab Knowledge Report 2014 asserts that most students in Arab universities across various disciplines suffer from inadequate teaching methods, while Arab universities in general exhibit extremely poor research policies, obsolete approaches to decision-making, and a failure to keep up with the requirements of contemporary knowledge society (Arab Knowledge Report, 2014, p. 97).

Assessments differ here. A number of the retired professors we interviewed, some of who have written on the history of social sciences in the Arab world, pointed out that there is a deterioration in quality across generations, if not complete discontinuity. In our interview with the education expert Adnan Al-Amin, he concluded that wide swaths of the new generation of university instructors are weaker than the former generation in their grasp of social science theories, which are replaced, and this is particularly true of Lebanon, by identity issues. The latter seem increasingly to determine research trajectories. Political sensitivities also act as a glass ceiling

above possibilities of research. Rural sociology expert Ahmad Baalbaki showed a greater critical spirit in another interview where he observed the negative effect of the political environment on the academic quality of universities. He discussed the case of Lebanon in particular, where he asserted that there is a decline in the quality of teaching that can be traced to national political divisions and a sectarian environment, which leaves its mark on the youth and generates a general retrogressive atmosphere in universities, dragging instructors along with it. Baalbaki regards this reality to be different than that of Lebanon in the 1960s and 1970s, where the nature of the conflicts was not the same, and when these were less related to issues of identity than is the case today.

There are those who believe that the quality of the university as an institution actually declined as a direct result of its expansion. This proposition is adopted by the sociologist Ahmad Musa Badawi (2014, 102) regarding sociology in Egyptian universities. Badawi sheds light on a decline in the discipline's quality due to its great expansion in the 1970s, which led to a certain leniency in granting degrees in the field, transforming it from a research-based science into an instructional one.

Many of those who have monitored the history of social sciences in universities witnessed a discontinuity between what they described as the

"founding generation", authors of many pioneering research efforts, and successive generations (particularly the present one), which seem to be generations lacking scholarly memory and thus knowledge conducive to accumulative growth. A prospective study from Iraq involving a sample of sociology and social work PhD students revealed that the participants had little or no knowledge of the historical achievements of sociology pioneers in Iraqi universities (we refer to figures such as Abdul-Jalil At-Tahir, Hatem Al-Kaabi, Shaker Mustafa Salim, Qayss An-Nuri, Yunus Hammadi At-Takriti, and even Ali Al-Wardi, who is considered one of the most prominent Arab sociologists of the 20th century (Abdul-Hussein 2014, 138-140)).

From a pragmatic perspective, discontinuity between past and present traditions or weak connections between them does not necessarily constitute a formative problem for any academic discipline. Any research tradition with clear achievements is conducive to rediscovery and expansion at later stages, especially if related academic thought remains too underdeveloped to gain contemporary confidence in itself.

Sometimes, academic memory alone seems capable of providing continuity to research traditions despite weak resources. This is the case for anthropology in Sudan, where the discipline is said to be propelled by the sheer momentum

of its golden age (Badawi 2014, 128). But it is important to recognize the true causes of the apparent lack of historical continuity of social science traditions in Arab universities. In fact, there is a wide range of explanations that can be proposed here. Some examples include: university expansion and its postulated connection to decline in quality; the role of great regional crises such as the blockade on Iraq (1991-2003) in deteriorating a country's academic structure; exacerbated sectarianism in Lebanon and its connection to university divisions along sectarian lines; the abandonment of some disciplines such as anthropology in Algeria post-independence due to its connection with French colonialism; and the suspicion with which sociology was initially viewed in Saudi Arabia due to its assumed connection with socialism and Marxism. Many of the above are political circumstances rather than problems of science, although they do have an impact during certain periods on how science performs its work.

It is also notable that the expansion of the universities, particularly in light of the weakness of a sense of academic community, leads to fragmentation in research and its approaches, making it difficult to determine the focal trajectories of Arab academic activity. The difference becomes clear if we look into the formative and early periods for social sciences in the Arab world. Then we discover clearly

significant, high-quality research achievements framed in terms of holistic visions concerning the nature of society, though the ideologies promoting holistic thought may differ. For instance, in previous periods we can find significant central interests in "national character" and its nature, in a manner linked to national identity and using an approach centered on social psychology. To give only one example, we can refer to Sayed Owais's pioneering study on people soliciting mediation of Muslim saints, particularly Imam Al-Shafi'i. Owais noted the presence of historical continuity for this form of supplication, extending back to Ancient Egypt and expressing common social traditions, although individual litanies were personal in content.

The same interest in the issue of national character emerges in some of Ali Al-Wardi's most important contributions in his studies of the Iraqi character. Al-Wardi divided this character into patterns, each of which was based on a local geographic environment. This approach is somewhat similar to that used in another work combining the concepts of national character and identity, namely Gamal Hamdan's "Shakhsiyyat Misr" [The Character of Egypt], which was influenced by the work of Hamdan's mentor Hassan Al-Sa'ati on the continuity of the concept of "justice" as one of the formative components of Egypt's historic character.

Similarly, we observe the same interest in the issue of national character in the first French sociological studies on Morocco at the beginning of the colonial era. Those studies supplied an image of the Moroccan character typified by a dichotomy between economic poverty and lavishness in public social relations, that is, a character combining material shortage with social pride and contentment with the status quo (Al-Zahi 2011, 13). Likewise, the issue of character and personality forms the cornerstone of Hamed Ammar's works, a pioneering sociologist of education in Egypt who portrayed society as an ensemble of certain character types such as "the son of the village," with his fierce loyalty to the local environment, and the "fahlawi" [literally: streetwise], the skillful manipulator of opportunities. Incidentally, it was precisely this latter character that was sharply criticized by Sadiq Jalal al-Azm in his famous book "Naqd Al-Fikr Ad-Dini" [Critique of Religious Thought], which depicted the fahlawi character as one of the main cultural factors leading to Arab defeat in the 1967 war.

As for later stages, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, interest in the issue of national character waned despite its sustained presence as a research issue. It was replaced by a number of conflicting research currents, just as was happening in Western universities then, although the nature of the currents was not the same. In that period, we notice that the study of social sciences in Western

universities (particularly sociology, history, and anthropology) saw the rise of leftist, Marxist, feminist, and other currents focusing on the study of social conflict, in addition to other currents that brought the perspectives of historically marginalized groups in society to the forefront.

These new currents clashed with older, conservative research currents that favored the study of social integration, social systems that combined all social groups, continuity factors in social systems, and the role of elites in making history. In Arab universities, other ensembles of research currents arose during the same period, one of which involved a critique of totalistic development thought. Ayn Shams University in Cairo became one of the most important centers housing this direction. Elsewhere, in the Algerian context, Hassan Remaoun identified four currents in the social sciences. The first three, dating from the period of independence, included first the technocratic current, which was basically concerned with development issues and marked by an applied approach. There was also the liberal current, then the populist current, which adopted the project of modernity along with the other two currents, but which feared the unchecked proliferation of Western values and opposed all apparent continuities with the colonial project. Later on, the Islamist current appeared as a fourth direction in the social sciences. It adopted some populist principles but only after

imbuing them with an air of religious sanctity (Remaoun 2014, 294-296). In this context, it is important to note that what Remaoun termed “the

populist current” corresponded to other trends elsewhere in the Arab world calling for the Arabization of social sciences (Hijazi et al, 1986).

**Distribution of Titles in the Research Products of Saudi Sociologists, 1970 - 2013**

Rank	Title	Percentage of All Themes 1970 - 2013
1	Crime	16.2
2	Family	11.7
3	Women’s Issues	6.9
4	Religious Sociology	6.0
5	Economic Sociology	5.7
6	Poverty and Housing Issues	3.7
7	Development	3.3
8	Educational Sociology	3.3
9	Aging	3.1
10	Organizational Sociology	3.1
11	Youth	3.1
12	Medical Sociology	2.7
13	Social Structure	2.6
14	Political Sociology	2.5
15	Social Change	2.1
16	Delinquency	2.1
17	Urban Sociology	2.0
18	Cultural Sociology	1.9
19	Rural Sociology	1.9
20	Sociology of Literature	1.9
	Other	14.2

Table 1

**Source:** Al-Khalifa, Abdullah Bin Hussein. 2014. “The Academic Formation of Sociology: The Case of Saudi Arabia”. In *The Future of Social Sciences in the Arab world*, editors Sari Hanafi, Nouria Benghabrit-Remaoun and Mujahidi Mustafa, 182-183. Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies.

There was also a current of limited impact in the 1980s that called for the Islamization of knowledge in the Maghrib (particularly in Morocco and Algeria) via Francophone graduates (Arouss 2014, 274). A more sustained push had occurred in Saudi Arabia earlier, where the idea of Islamizing the social sciences emerged particularly in sociology departments in Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University in the late 1970s and King Abdulaziz University in the early 1980s. This gave rise to academic materials such as "Islamic sociology", "Sociology from an Islamic Perspective", and "Islamic foundations for Sociology". This trend occurred in conjunction with a trend towards an applied approach in sociology, to be accomplished by divesting the discipline of philosophical and theoretical content that may entail criticism of the status quo, such as social theories, political sociology, and social philosophy, none of which found their way to university courses before the 1990s (Al-Khalifa 2014, 155-156).

In this context, it is worth noting the continued marginalization of critical trends within social sciences in Saudi Arabia, whether in university courses or research. At the doctorate level, we find that the issues receiving the most attention are those relating to social development and change, urban issues, and Saudi society, in addition to issues of crime, delinquency, and social control. These systematic preferences clearly reflect themselves in the research production of Saudi sociologists,

as Abdullah Ibn Hussein Al-Khalifa confirms via a study covering 1037 Saudi research productions over from 1970 until 2013. The study of crime, delinquency, and social control comes in the lead at rates exceeding 19% of titles, followed by family studies with rates approaching 12%. Only two titles out of 1037 dealt with social conflict, and only one dealt with expatriate labor, despite its tremendous importance not only in Saudi Arabia but also in the entire Gulf region in general. Al-Khalifa notes that political decisions have an impact on research trajectories. According to his study, although the issues of poverty and housing do appear in 4% of Saudi Arabia's research production, Al-Khalifa notes that 95% of these studies appeared only in the 2000s, meaning directly after King Abdullah made the first official recognition of poverty as a social problem in Saudi Arabia (Al-Khalifa 2014, 180-185).

Based on the above, it is clear that research topics correspond to the general trends followed by ruling policies and ideologies, as well as to known restrictions on freedom of research, or official preferences for some research directions and abjuration of others (despite the presence of exceptions, as is the case everywhere). There is, for instance, no good reason for such high rates of criminology research in a society with such a relatively low crime rate. However, this interest becomes more understandable if we approach the study of crime as part of a knowledge

ensemble that holds social control as its first concern, which itself propagates feelings regarding the sustained vulnerability of this control to be undermined or to collapse altogether. While it is understandable that there would be a relatively high number of studies of religion and family issues in a society said to be “conservative”, the absence of almost any interest in studying expatriate labor (which forms a significant social sector of up to 30% of the population) is strange, and may have to do with lack of encouragement for this kind of research.

Generally speaking, despite a quantitatively acceptable presence of social sciences in Arab universities, these sciences still suffer from inadequate interconnection at the Arab level, a lack of interest in Arab scientific collective memory, and fragmentation of research efforts. The combination of these factors undermines the sense of confidence within the social sciences, either directly or indirectly subjecting them to operate within limits imposed by political positions and circumstances. Nevertheless, this does not mean there is no hope for the emergence of Arab social science scholarly communities that may rediscover or reassess their historical memory. In

testament to this, recent times have in fact seen the emergence of important scholarly communities along these lines, particularly the communities that formed around such pioneering academic figures as Muhammad Al-Gohary in Egypt and Ali Al-Wardi in Iraq (Ibrahim 2014, 66-67).

Beyond quantitative criteria, we also come across promising experiments of exemplary nature, proving that Arab academic research is capable of overcoming many obstacles once certain standards are met. These standards include mature writing that clearly delineates the main epistemic and research questions, innovative methodological practices employing several approaches that support one another, and teamwork allowing collaborators to gain field experience and analytic capacities under controlled academic supervision (Badawi 2014, 125-127). Such standards transcend in their importance their immediate result, which is a competent academic production. They also generate new scholarly communities (although they may be thus far limited) that adhere to model approaches and methodologies and put into use research experiences resulting from academic collaboration in one form or the other.

## Some Characteristics of the Social Scientists in the Arab World<sup>[2]</sup>

To supplement this report, the team conducted an exploratory study through a questionnaire distributed to a target sample of 531 Arab scholars whose ages ranged from 29 to 67. The objective was to gather preliminary notes on their academic and intellectual backgrounds, their research activities, and the environment of their work. Out of 531 scholars, only 87 responded to the survey. This low response rate (17%) limited our conclusions such that they are not applicable to all social science scholars in the Arab world, although they still allow us to present a few preliminary descriptive statistics. The first thing we notice is the relatively young ages, which may be directly related either to the newness of universities and research centers, the increase in the number of social science specialists over the last few years, or the greater openness of younger researchers to answering the questions and communicating with our team. It is worth noting in this initial overview that 57% of the sample members were below the age of 40 and 74% are below the age of 45. We also find a clear gender imbalance, as 74% of the scholars who responded to the survey were male. In

the following, we point out a number of important characteristics that are to a certain extent generalizable, including the role of language in the academic formation of the individual scholar, research activity, and funding sources.

We observe that when it comes to the language of study, the role of Arabic recedes as the level of study advances. While 67% of scholars covered by the survey studied social sciences in Arabic at the BA level, only 32% of them did so at the PhD level, that is to say, the population using Arabic as a medium of learning dropped from about two-thirds to one-third at higher levels of learning. In contrast, the English language plays an increasingly crucial role in higher degrees. Despite the fact that those studying social sciences in English do not exceed 15% of the sample at the BA level, 52% of social science scholars at the PhD level saw their knowledge formed through that language. The presence of French at the BA level parallels that of English and is only slightly reduced with higher degrees. Here we see the inversely proportional correlation between the presence of Arabic and English in particular.

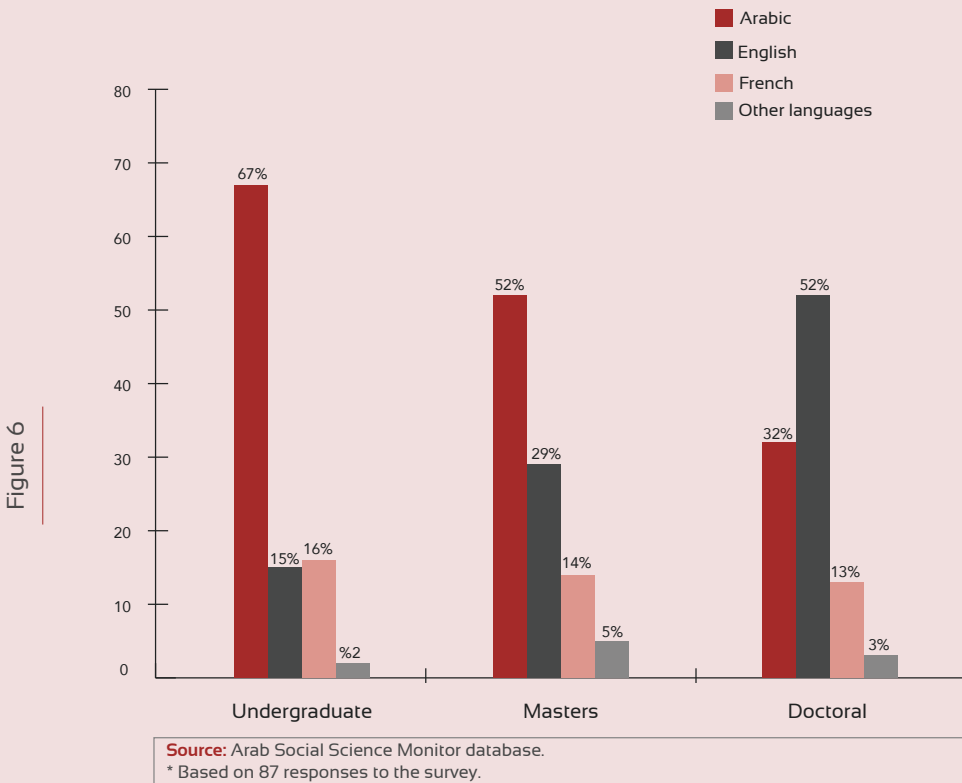
[2] The survey included sociologists with Master's and PhD degrees in the social sciences (or their equivalent) from any university in the world and regardless of whether they work in research, teaching, or administration. The survey targeted a sample of social science researchers associated with the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (meaning scholarship recipients, Council members, and participants in conferences organized by the Council). See the section on methodology for further details.



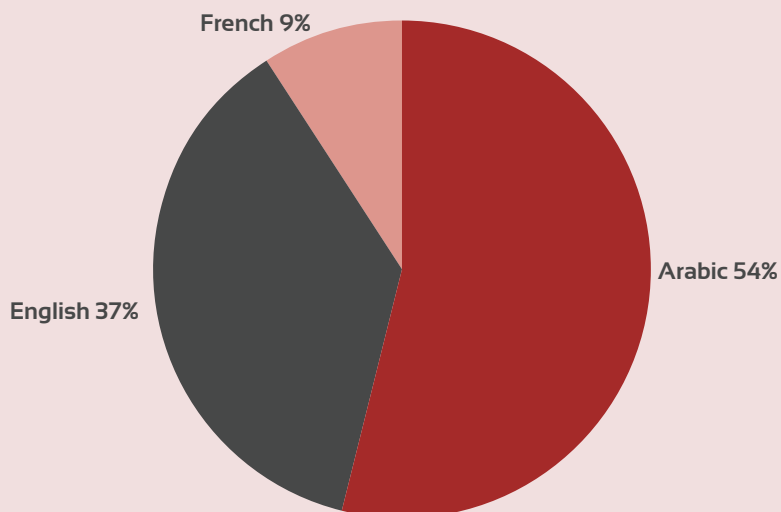
In the same context, studying outside the Arab world becomes more noticeable as degree of study advances, although to a lesser degree than the role of foreign languages. The ratio of those who study outside the Arab world increases from 27% at the Master's level to 36% for the PhD. The target countries for PhD scholars include Great Britain (14%), followed by the US and France (7% each). The rest are distributed over Canada, Germany, Spain, and India. In the Arab world, we also note the particular importance of Egypt and Algeria in producing social science

scholars at roughly comparable rates, but the two countries combined produce about 44% of the Master's degrees and 39% of the PhDs. This comes as no surprise if we keep in mind that the two countries together account for about 33% of the Arab world's total population. However, Algeria seems to be more productive as its population is less than half of that of Egypt. Other countries also show a distinguished record in this regard, such as Morocco (where 10% of the Master's degrees and 8% of the PhDs are produced) and Tunisia (6% of the Master's and 7% of the PhDs).

## Language of Study of Social Sciences\*

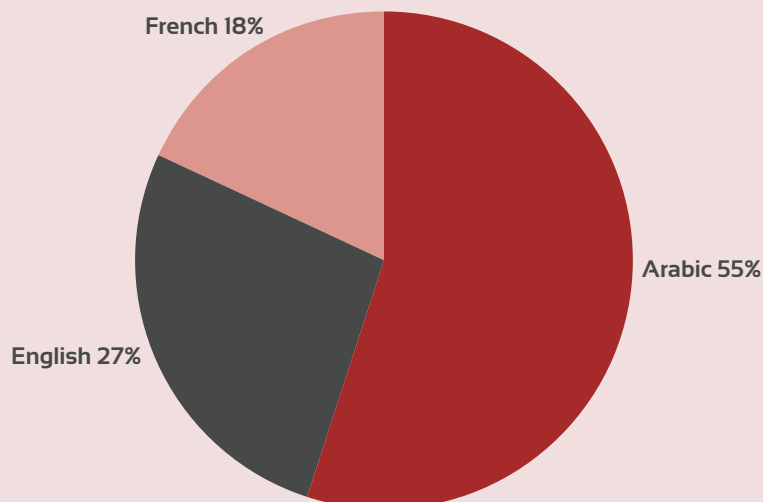


## Scientific Publications by Language\*



**Source:** Arab Social Science Monitor database  
\* Based on 987 publications by 87 respondents to the survey.

## Dominant Language for Those Who Published in more than One Language\*

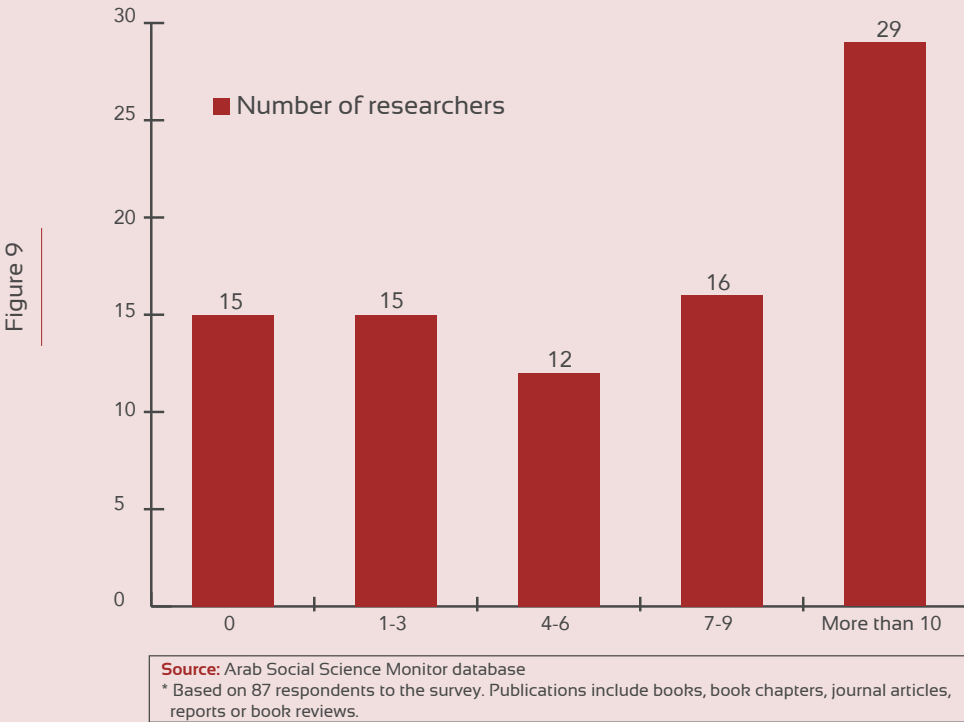


**Source:** Arab Social Science Monitor database  
\* Based on 987 publications by 87 respondents to the survey.

Figure 7

Figure 8

**Distribution of Researchers by Number of Publications\***



The relationship between the language of study and the language of academic publication differed from our expectations. Arabic was the leading language of 54% of the total publications even though only 32% of the PhD scholars actually studied in Arabic, based on the data we collected from our sample of scholars. (But we should keep in mind that this is also lower than the percentage of PhD recipients in the social sciences from universities in the Arab world (64%). English was the language of 37% of publications although it was the language of study for 52% of the sample. Similarly, French was the language of study for 13% of the PhD holders and the publication language for 9% of academic production

in the same sample. We should take into consideration the fact that we cannot view these languages as entirely separate, in light of the academic formation of the researcher. We see, for instance, that as many as 40% of sample participants publish their research in more than one language. We can safely say that these researchers interact with different knowledge environments, and that the language of their academic formation does not act as an obstacle preventing communication outside of that language’s bounds. Even within this segment, we see results more or less similar to the ones we saw before, albeit with different percentages. Arabic is still the first publication language for researchers who publish in more than

one language. It is notable, however, that publication in French has a greater presence in this particular segment, such that its percentage is almost twice that of those who write exclusively in French.

As expected, there were differences in the number of publications per researcher as a function of the age and position of the researcher. Despite the relatively young age of the participants in the sample, more than one-third of the researchers have already produced ten or more publications, in contrast to 17% with no research publications thus far (we must point out that under publications we included: books, articles published in books or scholarly periodicals, reports, and book reviews).

Regarding sources of funding for research, 71% of Arab social scientists stated that they received some sort of funding over the past five years, and these can be divided into two equal groups: half received research funds from a single source while the other half received funding from multiple sources. The workplace holds a

position of prominence in determining the possibility of research that requires funding, despite the existence of other sources for funding. We note the dearth of direct national or government funding for research, which may be linked to the general absence of national strategies pertaining to the role of social sciences. In fact, we observe that international funding plays a crucial role, which may not be clearly apparent by the figures in Table 2. The table seems to show that as many as 16% of researchers who received funding at all received it from international sources in one way or another. But international funding is also present under other entries in the table (that is, under every entry where we see "other sources"). If we add up all the figures we find that 40% of the researchers benefit from some level of international funding. Nevertheless, we cannot derive final conclusions about the relationship between funding and research agendas without an extensive study of the content of research funded by all parties, including national and private establishments, research centers, and other sources.

**Sources of Research Funding in the Past Five Years, 2010 - 2014\***

Source	Percent Researchers Benefiting
Workplace	32
Workplace and other sources	29
National or governmental institutions	5
National or governmental institutions or other sources	6
International sources	13
International sources or other sources	3
Sources other than the above-mentioned	11

Table 2

**Source:** Arab Social Science Monitor database

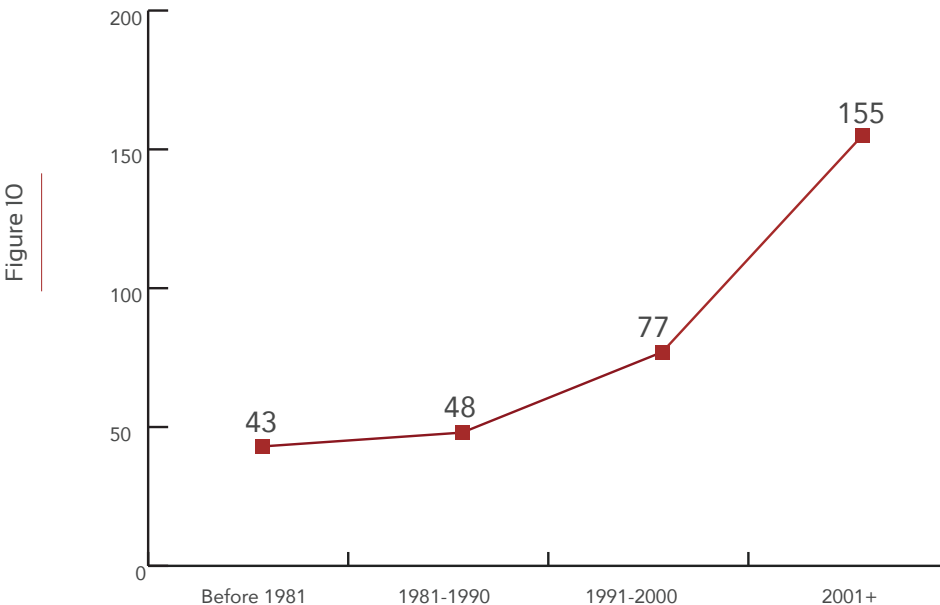
\* Based on 87 researchers

## Research Centers

Besides universities, research centers in the Arab world have enjoyed tremendous growth over the past few years. It is worth noting that this growth occasioned a period of growing interest in the role of civil society; the search for new, independent and dynamic research environments; and the emergence of a new generation of Arab social science scholars in numbers beyond universities' ability to absorb them, or who preferred to work outside the university. Generally, we found 436 research centers currently operating in the Arab world, while prior to the 1980s no more than 43

centers could be confirmed to exist, meaning that the number of research centers increased tenfold in 35 years. If we only consider the centers with confirmed dates of establishment (as depicted in Figure 10), we have a definite 6-7 fold growth over that period of time, with the pace accelerating until today. The highest growth rates are recorded in Algeria, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon, in addition to a noticeable increase in Egypt and a number of Gulf States. The figures provided by 73 research centers about the researchers working with them indicate that there is a rough average of 21 researchers per center (the Arab Social Science Monitor database).

**Number of Research Centers in the Arab Region by Year of Establishment\***



**Source:** Arab Social Science Monitor database  
 \* Based on 323 research centers for which the year of establishment is available out of a total of 436 research centers in the Arab region.

Although these figures may actually be higher than the general reality, it is clear that research institutions have become a major part of the Arab social science scholar's job market, alongside universities and civil society organizations. Arab research centers show up in ranked international indices, albeit in a faint way. The last Global Go To Think Tank Index Report (McGann, 2015) for ranking global research centers included two Arab world research centers within the world's 100 most important think tanks. They are Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Cairo and Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut (an American organization with a predominantly Arab research staff). If we consider which research topics are the basis for research center ranking, we find clear prevalence in research on national security topics, such that there are four Arab centers of this category among the most important 100 think tanks in the world that specialize in these issues. We also have 3 highly ranked Arab centers specializing in international relations, and one Arab center at most for each of the other different domains of social research (such as public health, transparency studies, and development among others). Beyond these rather traditional research areas, we notice a relatively new phenomenon, namely the rise of other unconventional Arab research center categories to international recognition. There are, for example, four Arab centers that occupy high

rankings in advocacy research, including two centers in Morocco (Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches en Sciences Sociales and Institut des Etudes Africaines), one in Egypt (Arab Forum for Alternatives), and the Qatar Foundation. There are also four Arab centers on the Best New Think Tanks list, and three in the Best Think Tank Network list, including a regional center (Regional Center for Strategic Studies in Egypt) and a transnational network (The Palestinian Policy Network). It is clear that advocacy, networking, and unconventional foci may indicate some of the important future trajectories for the work of Arab research centers.

In delving into the fields of emphasis within research centers about which we have sufficient information, we conclude that they do not reflect the same percentages as those fields we find in university disciplines, although there is a correlation between universities and research centers in certain fields. In research centers we see a distinguished presence for specializations that are not consistently organized as such in university faculties or colleges. These include development studies, which comes fourth among the fields comprising research centers' interests. There is a notable presence of cultural studies and a lesser one of gender studies, although both are present in one form or another under other traditional specializations. The most obvious result here is the contrast between the strong presence

of political science in research centers, compared to their university presence, where they come only fourth among traditional social sciences.

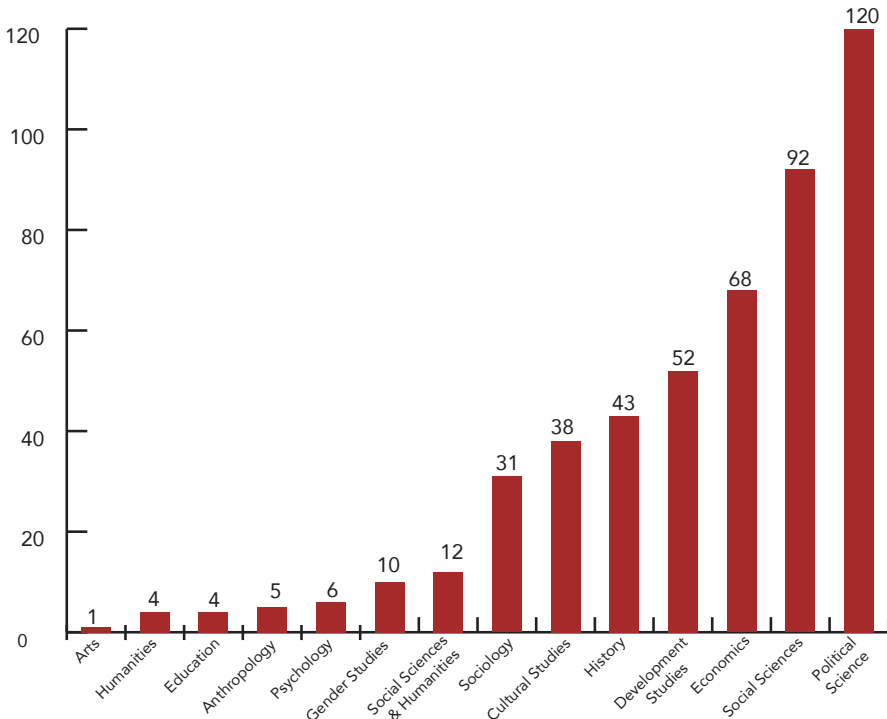
While we notice a mismatch between the presence of fields of research in university faculties and their presence in research institutions, universities still host the largest number of research centers in the Arab world (slightly less than half of them operate through a university). But universities play a more important

role in hosting research centers in some countries than in others. For instance, Algeria leads with 88% of its research centers operating through a university, followed by Egypt (56%), Saudi Arabia (54%), Iraq (45%), and Lebanon (47%).

However, it is noticeable that independent, non-university based research centers have gained greater prominence and high research productivity, especially in the domain of scholarly periodicals.

## Number of Research Centers by Discipline\*

Figure 11

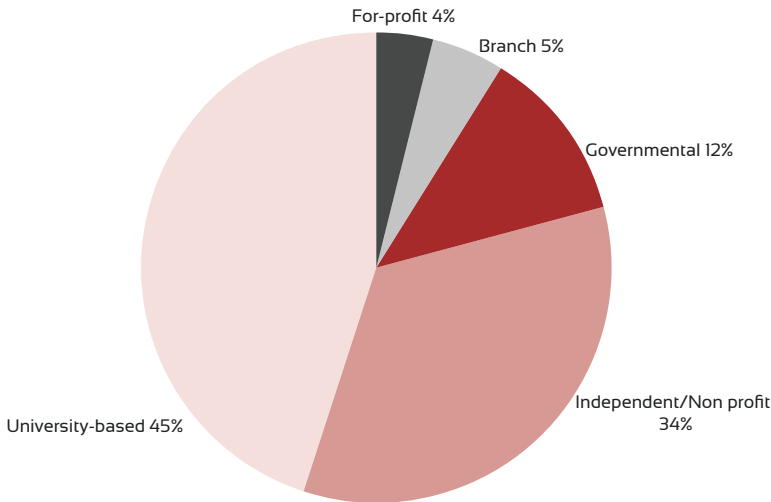


Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database

\* Based on 436 research centers. The total number of research centers in this graph exceeds the total number of research centers in the Arab region since some research centers cover more than one discipline.

## Social Science Research Centers by Type\*

Figure 12



Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database

We shall see later that 52% of these periodicals are currently produced by these independent centers. These independent centers, which are non-profit, non-government related, and not affiliated with a global think tank, currently comprise 34% of the total Arab research centers. If we add to them the establishments that act as branches for international organizations, then the percentage of centers neither directly affiliated with governments or universities rises to 39% of all research centers. The highest percentages, which can be taken as a sign of relative independence (but not absolute independence as this does not really exist anywhere), are recorded in Palestine (83%), Morocco (65%),

and Jordan (50%). We see these high proportions in counties that are not rich in resources, although they benefit from significant international interest, a growing presence of civil society, and a relatively large, well-educated segment of society.

It is worth noting that despite the fact that many research centers in the Arab world have global and regional connections (including funding relations), their interest in general remains focused on the local context. Thus a reading of the geographic concentration of these centers' research productions indicates that almost half of them focus on national issues followed by 31% that focus on the regional level (neighboring



countries). This means that 79% of research interests are focused either on the country in which the research center is located or on its immediate neighbors. In contrast, international issues account for only 14% of research interests, after which percentages become almost negligible, with 3% for Arab issues and

2% for African issues. However, these latter research interests may also be present in the 2% of the centers that did not specify any particular geographical region of focus. Overall, Arab research centers try to play a more practical role by concentrating on immediate contexts, although they are located in

## Geographic Focus of Social Science Research Centers\*

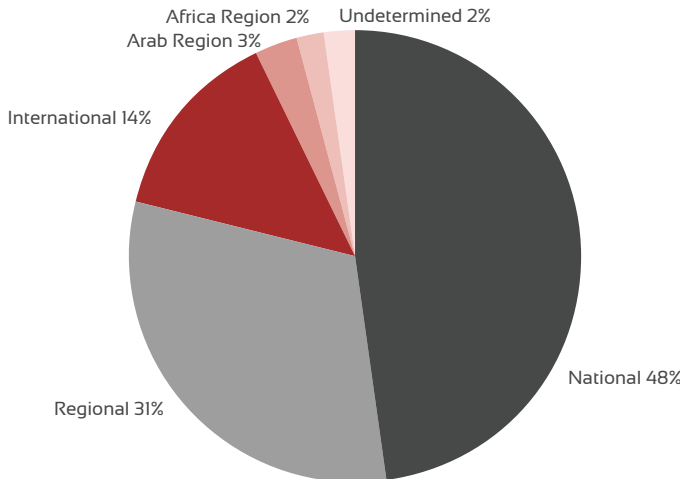


Figure 13

**Source:** Arab Social Science Monitor database

\* Based on 436 research centers. The total number of research centers in this graph exceeds the total number of research centers in the Arab region since some research centers cover more than one discipline.

countries that are constantly vulnerable to the consistent onslaught of external economic, security, political, and cultural influences.

However, we cannot consider these quantitative data to be sufficient indicators of the quality of research geography. They should not be looked at without considering that that minority of research centers that openly define their research geography in the Arab region

as a whole have a widely favorable reputation, relatively intensive research productivity, or a remarkable presence in international rankings. There are some prominent examples of certain well-established centers that stand out in this category, such as the Center for Arab Unity Studies in Beirut, and other relatively newly established centers such as the Arab Forum for Alternatives in Cairo and the Arab Thought Forum in Amman (McGann 2015, 86-87, 89, 111).

## Density of Social Science Research Centers Relative to Population Size

Country	Number of Social Science Research Centers	Number of Social Science Research Centers Relative to Population Size* (Center per 1 Million Persons)	Research Density
Lebanon	47	10.4	High
Palestine	29	6.9	High
Jordan	41	6.3	High
Djibouti	4	4.6	High
Bahrain	6	4.5	High
Qatar	9	4.1	High
Algeria	76	1.9	Moderate
Kuwait	5	1.5	Moderate
Tunisia	16	1.5	Moderate
Comoros	1	1.4	Moderate
Libya	7	1.1	Moderate
Saudi Arabia	28	1.0	Moderate
Morocco	29	0.9	Moderate
UAE	8	0.9	Moderate
Egypt	70	0.9	Moderate
Iraq	22	0.7	Low
Oman	2	0.6	Low
Yemen	12	0.5	Low
Mauritania	2	0.5	Low
Syria	7	0.3	Low
Sudan	13	0.3	Low
Somalia	2	0.2	Low
Total	436	1.1	Moderate
Research Centers in the World (All Disciplines)	**6681	0.9	Moderate

**Source:** Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database

\* Population size based on World Bank statistics

\*\* Source: McGann, James G. 2015. 2014 *Global GoTo Think Tank Index Report*. Philadelphia: The Lauder Institute, University of Pennsylvania (Page 53)

Table 3

We also note that research center density varies from one country to the other in proportions that clearly do not so much concern a country's national wealth as much as they relate to the historic traditions of

social sciences within the country, the presence of civil society, and, to a certain extent, international interest. If we look at the absolute numbers of centers we find Algeria and Egypt at the forefront (76 in the former and 70

in the latter), followed by Lebanon and Jordan (each hosting more than 40 centers), then followed by varying figures in other countries. However, in looking at what can be termed “research density” in each country (i.e. the number of research centers in a country relative to total population), which provides us with deeper insight into the relationship between research activities and the general social atmosphere nurturing them, we can begin to approach this phenomenon in a different way. In this regard, Lebanon is at the forefront with over 10 centers per million inhabitants, followed by Palestine and Jordan with 6-7 centers per million inhabitants. Other differences surface that uncover the tenuous connection between a country’s gross national wealth and its research activities. Thus we can only be surprised that a country like Djibouti has a proportion of research centers relative to population size that exceeds many times the same proportion for every Gulf state, with the exception for Bahrain and Qatar, which approach but still do not meet Djibouti’s proportion. Moreover, if we look at Egypt from this perspective we find that its research activity is weaker than it initially seemed, although it does match the general global average (our table here includes all the research centers in the world and not just those interested exclusively in the social sciences. We do not have accurate global statistics on the latter).

Thus we conclude that the phenomenon of the fast-growing research centers in the Arab world as a whole does not generate the same research density in each country. As will be demonstrated, we have densities ranging from one research center per 100,000 inhabitants as is the case in Lebanon, to less than one center per 3 million inhabitants in Sudan, and to less the one center per five million inhabitants in Somalia. We also find that it is possible to divide the Arab world into different categories according to the research density in each country, especially in comparison with global ratios. There is a group of Arab countries where research density exceeds 4 centers per one million inhabitants, which includes three countries adjacent to each other (Lebanon, Palestine, and Jordan), two Gulf states (Qatar and Bahrain, also adjacent to each other), and Djibouti. These countries are distinguished by their relatively small size and their openness to the outside world, in addition to other factors. Djibouti, however, constitutes an exception to the general Arab trend in this regard, as the country’s research density is directly related to government initiatives (in contrast to other countries in this category where government-related centers are but a minority, 3 out of 4 Djibouti’s research centers are government centers).

Following the countries with high research density are the countries that can be categorized as having fair

research density. The highest of these countries contain approximately 2 centers per million people and the lowest match the international average at 0.9 centers per 1 million inhabitants. Algeria comes first in this category, followed successively by Kuwait, Tunisia, and Comoros. Then come Libya, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt.

It is also notable that these countries vary on such factors as population density and national wealth, although they may converge on other indicators such as freedom of research in the social sciences and the levels of official or social interest in it. Finally, we note a number of countries with research densities below the world average. In order, they are Iraq, Oman, Yemen, Mauritania, Syria, Sudan, and Somalia. With the exception of Oman, we notice that these countries suffer from political instability, low human development indicators, or both. However, these factors do not constitute a decisive standard on which to base conclusions, as such problems also exist in other countries with higher research density.

Accordingly, it seems that the main common factors between those low-density countries are either a lack of openness to global research activity or a lack of solid connections to global social sciences. This applies to Iraq as well: Despite the great historical momentum of social sciences (especially sociology) in Iraq, wars and blockades have engendered a discontinuity from that rich heritage

that has proven difficult to overcome. Nevertheless, Iraq did see other types of institutional growth in the social sciences over the last decade, particularly university growth.

Generally speaking, the research center phenomenon has become an integral part of the functioning of social sciences in all countries, in spite of differences in local circumstances, means, goals, the nature of their work, research staff, knowledge production, and funding sources. On the one hand, they provide a forum for the social sciences outside the duties of university instruction. On the other hand, they tend to produce a nature of knowledge that is deeper, more precise, and in some cases more comprehensive than we find in the public sphere. As such, these research centers pave the way for the social sciences to focus on research activities oriented towards different groups, ranging from decision-makers, to civil society, to the learned communities, and to partisan and political structures, or other segments that have participatory interests. This is regardless of whether the research product takes an applied, advocacy, networking (i.e. contributing to the formation of a scholarly group), or documentary direction, or any other direction for that matter. Likewise, target groups provide research centers with the distinctive ability to influence the local context. They also provide frameworks for practicing a social science that is unrestrained by traditional university disciplines, even though it may be restrained by the context of the research center's general goals.

In some cases, we can consider this context to constitute some kind of limitation. However, the quantitative density of research centers, and how varied they are in terms of their purposes, reduces the risk of the hegemony of any specific context, paving the way for multiplicity in methodologies, proposed topics, and approaches for combining disciplines in ways that may not be possible for traditional university disciplines. All this depends to a large extent on a number of previously mentioned factors that aid in increasing the efficiency of research centers. The most important of these factors are freedom of research, communication with global social sciences as well as local knowledge traditions, contribution to forming and networking Arab scholarly communities, and an ability to communicate with all components of the local society.

## Professional Societies

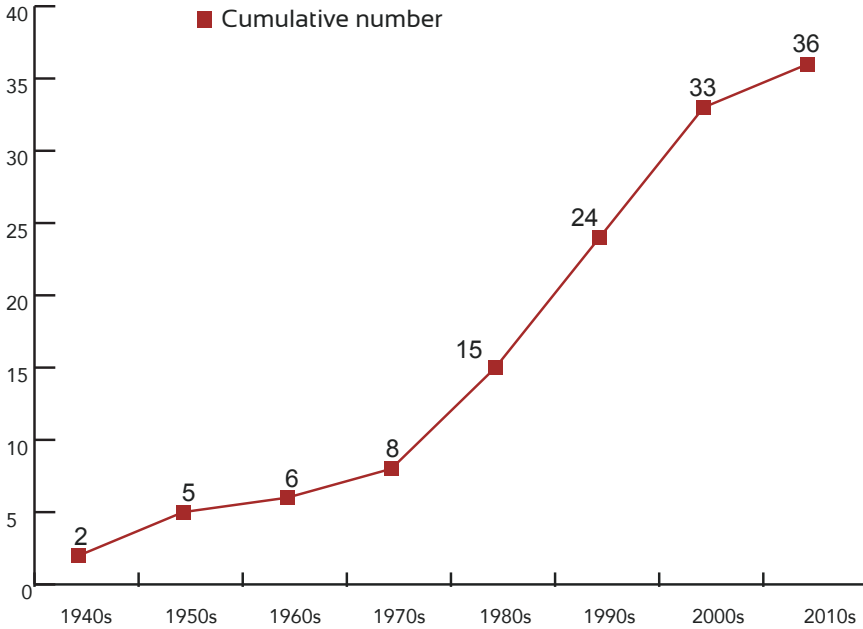
In this part of the study, our team monitored 68 currently active professional societies in the Arab world, the membership of each consisting of specialists from a field within the social sciences. The following chart indicates the rate of growth in the number of these societies (the chart includes only those societies with known dates of establishment). The growth rate of these societies parallel the accelerated quantitative growth in other frameworks nurturing the social sciences, including

universities, research centers, and scholarly periodicals. A high growth rate can be observed in this case as well, such that 78% of societies with confirmed dates of establishment have arisen since 1981, while one-third of them have arisen since 2000. This means that we either face a highly accelerating or highly volatile phenomenon.

It would be useful here to take a historical perspective that allows us to study the rate of extinction of professional societies, although the data currently available does not allow us to conclusively determine the number of societies that have disappeared in the same time period (i.e. since 1941). Professional societies are civil society organizations that rely on built-in factors like participant enthusiasm, the soundness of rules and procedures, and administrative efficiency. The fortunes of these societies may also rely on external factors such as financial support, the legal framework structuring their existence, or the political atmosphere surrounding them. Thus it is easy to see that there is a host of variable factors that on an ongoing basis affect any society's ability to live on or expand, or inversely, become extinct or contract. Therefore, the phenomenon of institutional extinction, especially in the case of professional societies, requires a special study that determines rates of extinction and delves deep into their contributing causes, including internal and external factors.

## Growth of Professional Societies by Year of Establishment\*

Figure 14



Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database

\* Based on 36 professional societies for which the year of establishment is available out of a total of 68 professional societies in the Arab region.

In any case, there seems to be clear acceleration in the establishment rate of professional societies, which indicates that social sciences in the Arab world today are heading in the direction of forming their own identities. However, the success of professional societies in this regard depends not only on reducing extinction rates, but also relies on investing in factors that may increase their academic acclaim and social capital, like providing members with services, defending their professional rights and freedoms, holding periodic

gatherings, and publishing periodicals regularly. However, we do note some facts that reflect the continuing institutional weakness of Arab professional societies, especially in terms of scholarly periodicals in the Arab world, of which only 14 (6% of a total of 217 periodicals) are issued by professional societies.

Table 4 briefly highlights the few periodicals issued by professional societies in the Arab world, arranged in chronological order of establishment. It seems that the

frequency of establishment has remained consistent for professional societies' periodicals since the 1990s. We notice the sustained significance of certain cities for Arab scholarly publication, like Beirut, which houses 3 periodicals,

all published by the Center for Arab Unity Studies in collaboration with 3 Arab professional societies: The Arab Society for Economic Research (1992), the Arab Society for Political Science (2003), and the Arab Sociological Association (2008). We also observe

**Periodicals Issued by Professional Societies**

Periodical	Professional Society	Frequency	Place of issue	Date of Establishment	Discipline	Language
Majallat Al-Turath Al-Arabi	Arab Writers Union in Syria	Quarterly	Damascus	1979	History	Arabic
Majallat Shu'un Ijtima'iyya	Sociologist Association	Quarterly	Sharjah	1984	Social Sciences	Arabic English
Majallat Ilm An-Nafs	Egyptian Association for Psychological Studies	Semi-annual	Cairo	1991	Psychology	Arabic
Majallat Buhuth Iqtisadiyya Arabiyya	Arab Society for Economic Research	Quarterly	Beirut	1992	Economics	Arabic
Majallat Al-Mu'arrehh Al-Arabia	Arab Historians Society	Annual	Cairo	1993	History	Arabic
Al-Tarih Al-Arabi	Moroccan Historians Society	Quarterly	Rabat	1996	History	Arabic
Revue Tunisienne d'Économie	Association Tunisienne des Economistes		Manouba (Tunisia)	1997	Economics	French
Dirasat Iqtisadiyya	Saudi Economics Association	Semi-annual	Riyadh	1998	Economics	Arabic English
Majallat Al-Fitr As-Siyasi	Arab Writers Union in Syria	Quarterly	Damascus	2001	Political Science	Arabic
Al-Majallah Al-Arabiyyah Li Ul-Ulum As-Siyassiyah	Arab Association for Political Science	Tri-annual	Beirut	2003	Political Science	Arabic
Idafat (Al-Majalla Al-Arabiyya Li Ulm Al-Ijtima'a)	Arab Association for Social Science	Quarterly	Beirut	2008	Sociology	Arabic
International Journal of Modern Anthropology	Association Tunisienne d'Anthropologie	Annual	El-Menastir (Tunisia)	2008	Anthropology	English
Questions d'Économie Marocaine	Association Marocaine des Sciences Économiques	Annual	Rabat	2009	Economics	French
Revue Marocaine de Science Politique	Association Marocaine de Science Politique	Irregular	Rabat	2010	Political Science	Arabic French

Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database

Rabat's presence as a center for three periodicals, two of which are newly established. In Damascus, a unique phenomenon can be observed, where we find the only Arab society that issues more than one periodical, a phenomenon that can be traced to the interdisciplinary nature of that society (The Arab Writers Union in Syria). In turn, we also note a presence of non-central cities as homes of 3 periodicals: two in Tunisia (in Monastir and Manouba) and one in the United Arab Emirates (in Sharjah, which hosts one of the oldest Arab periodicals published by a professional society A look at the academic fields of the societies'

periodicals shows economics possessing the greatest institutional momentum among the social sciences in the Arab world, with 4 periodicals issued by economic societies. This may to some extent account for the weak presence of economics in interdisciplinary periodicals, which we will study in a later section of this report. It seems that in this regard economics has a more stable institutional presence to an extent that allows Arab economists to maintain independence from the other social sciences, and perhaps fails to encourage communication with them. At the same time, we note a prevalent linguistic foreignness

### Periodicals Issued by Professional Societies by Discipline and Language

Discipline	Number of Periodicals	Language
Economics	4	Arabic 1, Bilingual (Arabic+English) 1, French 2
History	3	Arabic 3
Political Science	3	Arabic 2, Bilingual (Arabic+French) 2
Psychology	1	Arabic 1
Sociology	1	Arabic 1
Anthropology	1	English 1
Social Sciences	1	Bilingual (Arabic+English) 1

Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database

Table 5



in the field of economics, such that only one of its periodicals is issued in Arabic (and it comes as no surprise that this periodical is published through the Center for Arab Unity Studies), while two others are issued exclusively in French and the fourth is bilingual (Arabic and English). In contrast, periodicals in the field of history, which is the second most institutionally stable social science, are all issued in Arabic. Tunisia maintains the unique distinction of issuing the only periodical specializing in anthropology from an Arab professional society (but its language is exclusively English).

It is also clear that most professional societies are oriented towards a local audience, as

evidenced by the fact that 59 out of 68 operate within a single Arab country, in contrast to 8 societies oriented towards the entire Arab world. There is also a noticeably clear weakness in communication efforts across the immediate regional environment, such that only one society is oriented towards a larger Arab region (the Gulf Cooperation Council's Society for History and Archeology). This clear dominance of the national domain as the most used framework for the formation of professional societies may indicate that this is the easiest framework both logistically and legally for establishing professional societies. However, this does not explain the almost total neglect of the regional

## Geographic Focus of Professional Societies

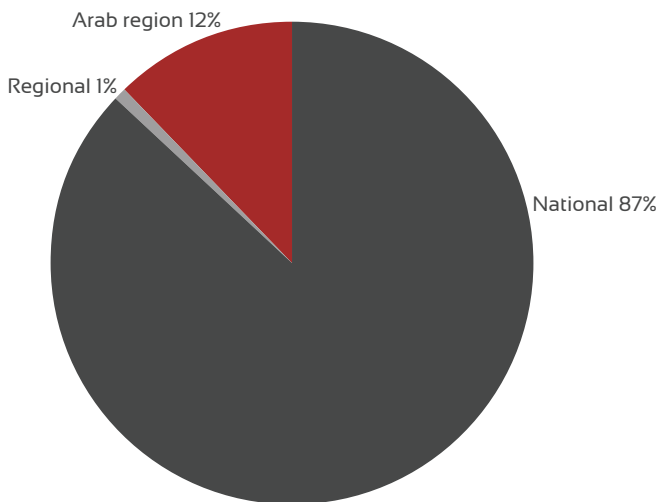


Figure 15

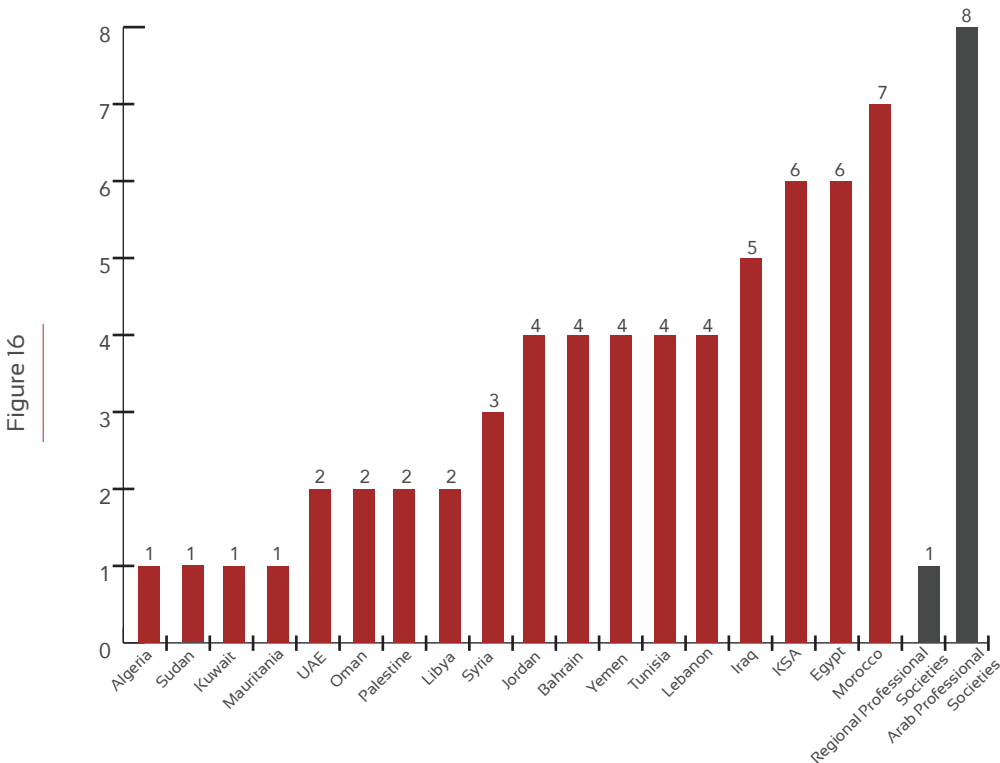
Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database

domain and bypassing it in favor of the wider Arab domain whenever the opportunity arises for establishing a society at a more encompassing scale than that of a single country.

Professional societies oriented towards the entire Arab world are concentrated in a limited number of cities that likewise host other general Arab institutions. Three societies are located in Cairo and the same number in Beirut, in addition to one each in Tunisia

and Damascus. National societies are mostly located in the countries' capitals with some exceptions such as Yemen, with 2 out of 4 societies located in Aden. Add to this the few cases of other non-capital cities hosting professional societies, such as the League of Young Moroccan Economists in Agadir, The Tunisian Association of Anthropology in Monastir, the Jordanian Anthropologist Society in Irbid, and the Egyptian Association for Psychological Studies in Hilwan.

### Number of Arabic, Regional and National Professional Societies



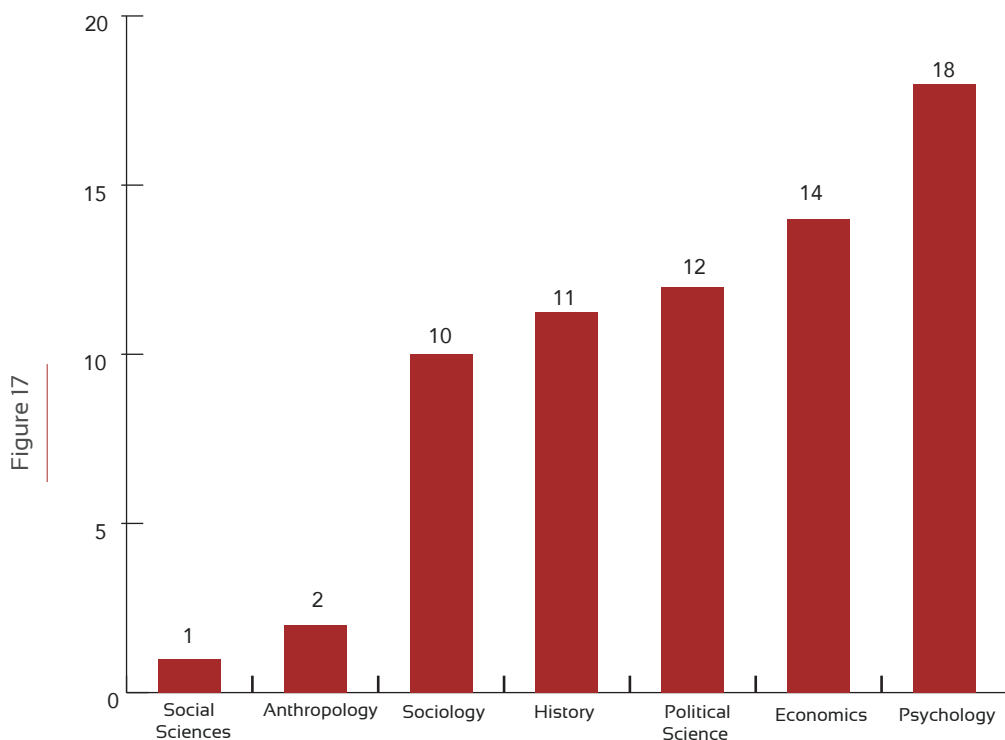
Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database

The concentration of professional associations in a certain country can be seen as an indicator of the capacity of that country's scholarly community to organize independently, network its members, and provide them with some sort of common identity. There are clear differences between Arab countries in this regard. For instance, because other indicators in Algeria like the great number of faculties, periodicals, and research centers point to the fact that the country is one of the most invested countries in the social sciences in the Arab world, it comes as a surprise that professional societies in the social sciences are scarce. This discrepancy may mean that despite some creative initiatives, the social sciences in Algeria still largely depend on government support more than on their own self-propulsion and the organizational skills of social science scholars. In general, the discrepancies between countries do not bring out the role of national wealth as much as they reflect the internal capacities of the scholarly community. Morocco provides the greatest potential for forming a scientific community as it hosts the largest number of social science professional societies in the Arab world, followed by Egypt, then Saudi Arabia, and then Iraq. There are also a number of countries where professional societies are being formed at a notable rate given the relatively lower size of both overall populations and scholarly communities within the country. Examples include Tunisia, Jordan,

Lebanon, Yemen, and Bahrain. Examining professional societies by discipline brings up a number of crucial discrepancies, the most obvious of which is the high number of psychology societies followed by economics societies. These, as we shall later see, are also the two disciplines with the lowest presence in Arab scholarly periodicals. It is clear that Arab scholarly communities are not equally weak in all disciplines, but it also seems that the most organized disciplines are the least influential outside their own specializations, that is, in interdisciplinary environments. We may view this phenomenon in either a positive or a negative light. On the one hand, it may mean that these disciplines are self-contained, or that their specialists are simply uninterested in benefitting from the products of other disciplines, or that the discipline itself is stuck in orbits of specialized jargon, making it difficult for it to change trajectory. On the other hand, we may also see the capacity to self-organize as a measure of the discipline's maturity and self-confidence, or of its specialists' attention to detail, the depth of their knowledge of their field, and their sense of the importance of their specializations.

Although we can call attention to this clear discrepancy, this report cannot determine which of the above possibilities best accounts for it, as this would require an in-depth study of the scientific content of the societies. We also note that fields of specialization are clear in the case

## Number of Professional Societies by Discipline



Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database

of professional societies in contrast to research centers and scholarly periodicals. As such, professional societies are distinguished from other social science frameworks in terms of greater clarity of their identity. They are also distinguished from university departments and faculties in terms of the importance of their self-propelling factors. In contrast to universities, professional societies need creation initiatives and then other initiatives to guarantee their survival. For their continuing viability, it is not sufficient for its members to simply enroll in

a pre-defined bureaucratic system, as they would in Arab universities in general.

Finally, although we do not in this framing report address the scientific content of the products of professional societies (this requires its own study), it is useful to note the correlation between critical thought (one of the sources of exploration and discovery) and the momentum of self-motivation that underlies the establishment of societies, providing them with vitality and viability.

The most prominent example of such a correlation is in the Center of Psychological Studies (<http://www.filnafs.com/fil14.html>), which is one of the professional societies we monitor. The center played an active role in critiquing the validity of certain aspects of global psychology in dealing with psychological crises in the Arab world. The center strictly rejects a mechanical application of global psychology to the Arab context, and has repeatedly warned against accepting foreign classifications (and particularly American ones, or DSM) of psychological and psychiatric disorders as this would only serve to create a distorted view of the Arab individual as psychologically disturbed if not insane. According to the center, these classifications even ignore American society's own need for a therapy that is more understanding of moral crises and their significance. The center calls for treatments that respect the Arab individual and direct scrutiny of the role of pharmaceutical corporations in influencing the trajectories of psychology. This example provides a model for creative approaches that may be found in other professional societies with a more in-depth exploration. It is fair to characterize as creative approaches those presenting a critical perspective to the application of a knowledge that is inconsistent with the particulars of a local context, while at the same time proposing approaches and solutions capable of leaving a global scientific mark that transcends local particularities.

## Social Sciences in Scholarly Periodicals <sup>(3)</sup>

**The research team monitored 217 scholarly periodicals related to the social sciences currently issued in the Arab world.** As with all other phenomena of institutional growth nurturing the social sciences in the Arab world, most of these periodicals appear to be newly established. They are growing in quantity at an accelerated pace, as indicated in the chart of periodicals with confirmed dates of establishment.

Following a careful examination of the types of institutions issuing periodicals, it is apparent that independent research centers play the greatest role in periodical growth. Independent centers currently issue 52% of Arab scholarly periodicals compared to only 37% issued by universities, either directly or through a university research center. Despite this accumulating knowledge momentum, the figures reflect a different reality, one of weak professional societies in the Arab world. These do not issue more than 6% of the scholarly periodicals (14 out of 217).

The data reveal a clear imbalance in terms of country of issue. As expected, there is a relatively large number of respected and enduring periodicals in countries that have historically enjoyed relative freedom of research such as Lebanon. There is also a significant number of

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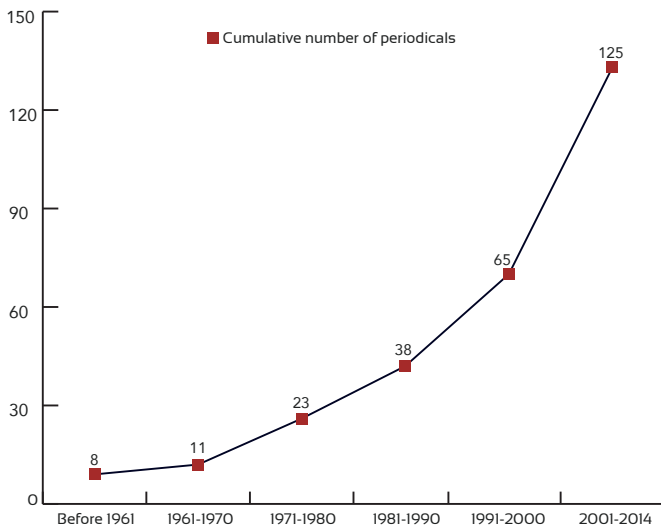
[3] Periodicals are defined as publications issued at regular intervals (monthly, every two months, quarterly, annually, etc...), that are subject to review (for example by an expert in the field for academic periodicals or a professional editor or editing board), and that form a part of a series of core publications (such as academic journals, research journals, book series, magazines which specialize in commentary and op-eds, working papers, studies, etc...). This is in contrast to news publications, whether or not they are self-contained, issued from Arab establishment, whether defunct or still in circulation.

periodicals issued in countries with recently developed interest in the social sciences, such as the Arab Maghreb and Qatar, as well as from countries that display increasing

momentum in civil society and are the focus of international interest such as Palestine (which comes in the lead if we take country population size into account), Iraq, and Jordan.

**Quantitative Growth of Scholarly Periodicals in the Arab Region by First Year of Publication\***

Figure 18

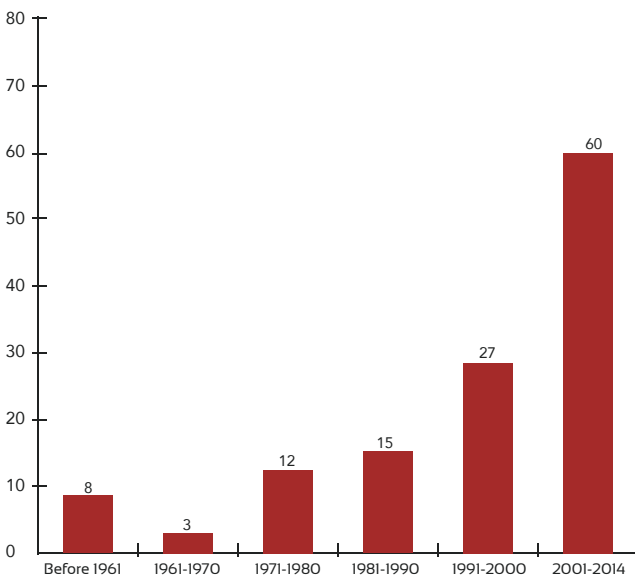


**Source:** Arab Social Science Monitor database

\* Based on 125 scholarly periodicals for which the first year of publication is available out of a total of 217 scholarly periodicals in the Arab region.

**Quantitative Growth of Scholarly Periodicals in the Arab Region by First Year of Publication\***

Figure 19

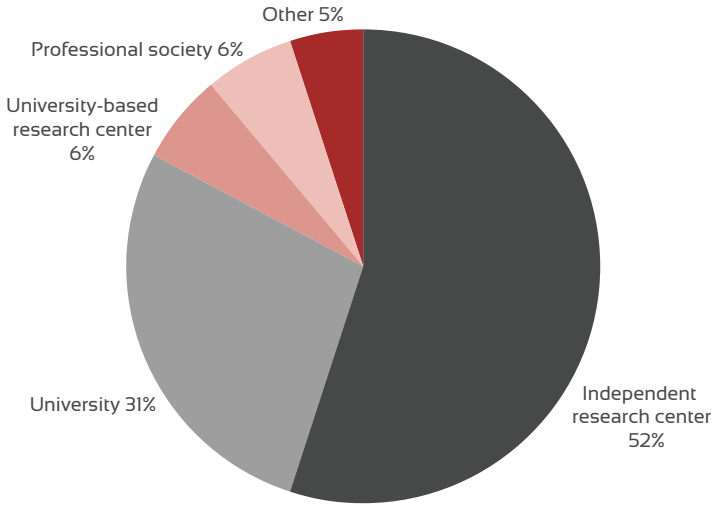


**Source:** Arab Social Science Monitor database

\* Based on 125 scholarly periodicals for which the first year of publication is available out of a total of 217 scholarly periodicals in the Arab region.

## Scholarly Periodicals by Type of Publishing Institution

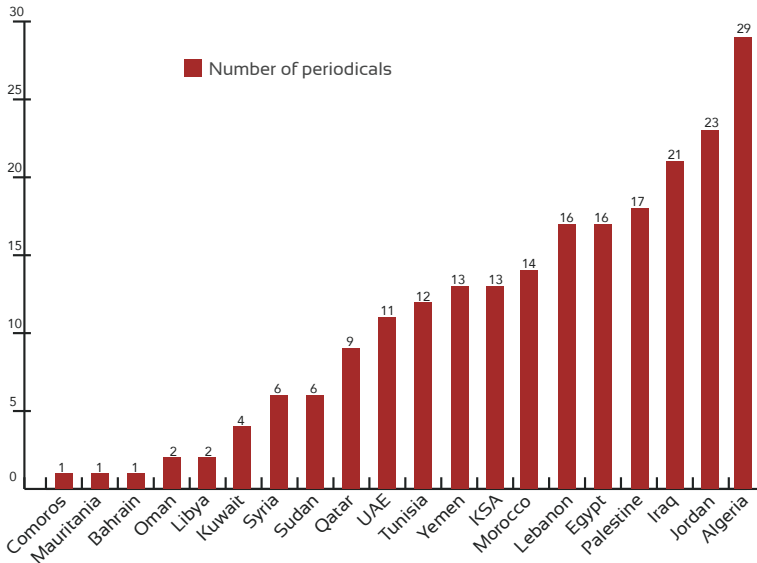
Figure 20



Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database

## Scholarly Periodicals by Country

Figure 21



Source: Arab Social Science Monitor database

## The Content of Scholarly Periodicals: A Sample Study

A background study conducted by Dr. Mokhtar El-Harras on scholarly periodicals tackled a sample of 8 refereed periodicals published in the field of general social sciences without specializing in a particular subfield. A number of periodicals with a specialized identity were included if that identity did not prevent them from publishing articles rooted in other disciplines. The sample was selected according to standards that take into account the variety of the institutions that publish periodicals, including ministries, universities, civic institutions and research centers, as well as variance in publication frequency (monthly, quarterly, and annually). The survey covered all the articles and texts published in the last five years; when necessary, the survey method was modified in a way that did not significantly impact the results of the study. Such adjustments were undertaken in instances where there were issues with publishing dates and logistics. In total, 732 contributions were monitored in this study.

The monitoring was based on classifying the contributions by discipline, type, presentation style, methodological techniques, subject, the society under study, references used, researcher nationality, the number of his/her contributions, and collaborative research, if applicable. The selected periodicals include: "Al-

Mustaqbal Al-Arabi" [the Arab Future] (Center for Arab Unity Studies, Beirut), "Al-Hayat Ath-Thaqafiyah" [Cultural Life] (Ministry of Culture, Tunisia), Hespéris Tamuda (Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Rabat), "Majallat Al-'Ulum Al-Ijtima'iyah" [Periodical of the Social Sciences] (The University of Kuwait), "Al-Majallah Al-Ijtima'iyah Al-Qawmiyyah" [Pan-Arab Social Periodical] (National Center for Social and Criminological Research, Egypt), Idafat [Additions] (Arab Sociological Association, Lebanon), Insaniyyat [Humanities] (National Centre of Research in Social and Cultural Anthropology, Algeria), and Imran (The Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS), Qatar).

We will now present the most important results of the survey, which include the distribution of researcher nationalities or national affiliation, the relationship between nationality of the researcher and the community under research, social science disciplines by proportion, research topics, techniques used, and the relationship between academic periodicals and the formation of scholarly communities.

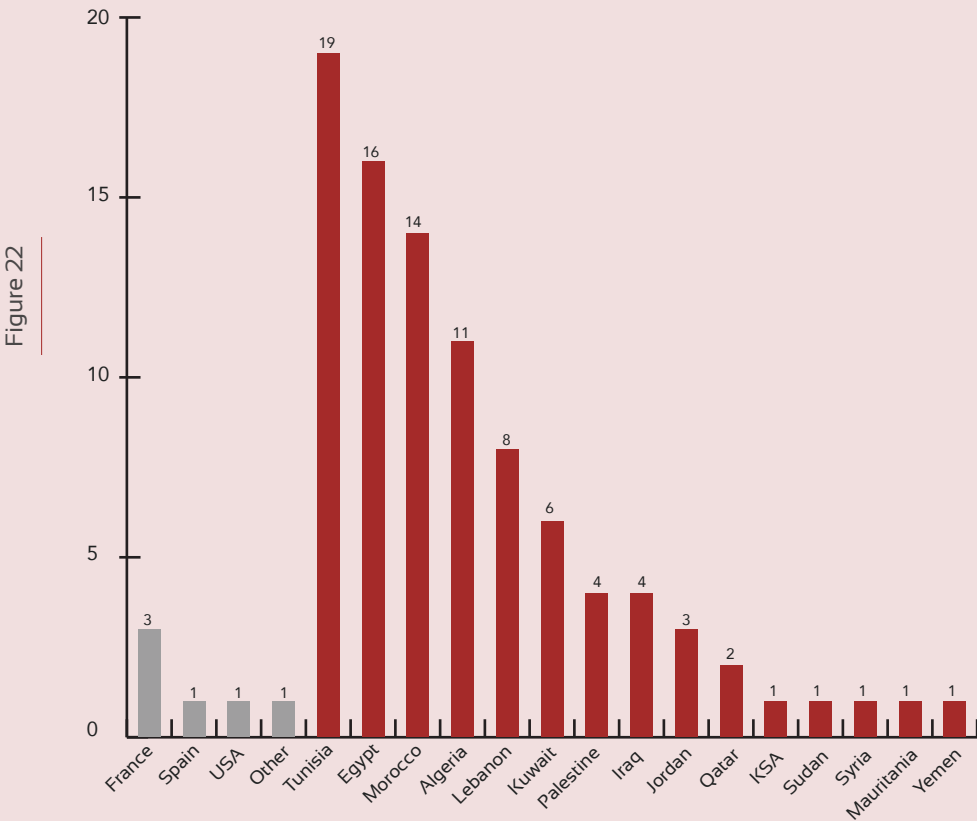
Figure 22 reflects some preliminary data on authors by nationality. Authors from the Arab Maghreb constitute a notable presence with 41% of the total contributors in Arab scholarly periodicals. This phenomenon lends



more support to the conclusions of other studies that have asserted the qualitative superiority of the Arab Maghreb over the Arab Mashreq in the social sciences (Hanafi and Arvanitis, 2015). This phenomenon is sometimes explained in terms of the clearer continuity of education systems inherited from the French colonial era as compared to with those inherited from the British colonial era.

A preliminary confirmation of this proposition is best represented by the relatively distinguished presence of researchers from Lebanon, a country that had experienced a stronger continuity with the French educational system than Syria, another Arab Mashreq country subjected to French colonialism but with less long-term impact on the educational system than its Lebanese counterpart. This

## Proportion of Researchers in 8 Arab Peer-reviewed Periodicals by Nationality, 2010 - 2014\*



**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
 \* Based on 732 articles

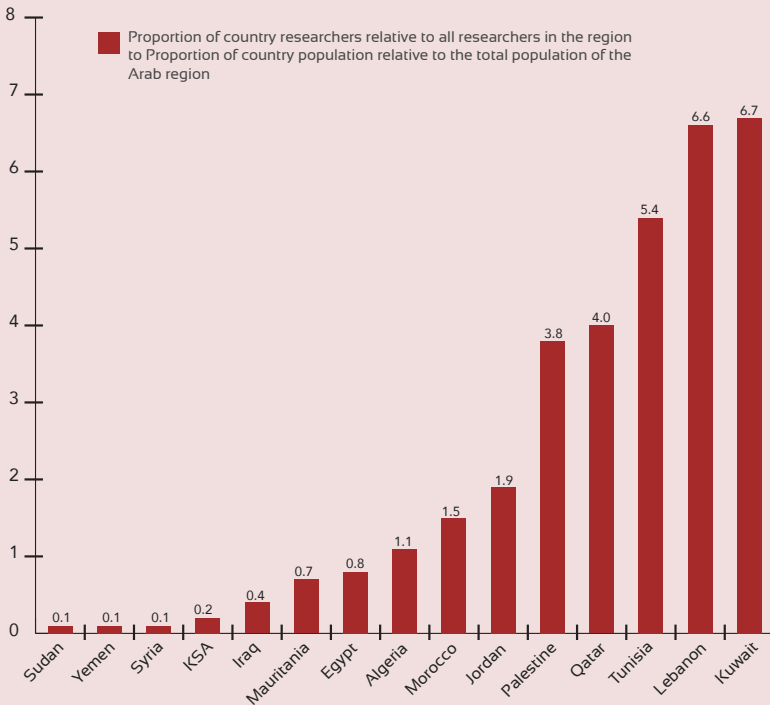
difference perhaps has something to do with variation in local circumstances. Lebanon, for example, had an influential elite imbued with French culture, and in the Arab Maghreb French colonialism was able to deeply root itself in the culture for a much longer time than in the Arab Mashreq.

Generally speaking, there are four countries that each produce over 10% of the authors present in Arab scholarly periodicals (Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria). Then come four other Arab nations whose social science scholars account for 4-10% of article authors (Lebanon, Kuwait, Palestine, and Iraq), followed by the rest of the Arab nations.

Even though this distribution gives an absolute number of researcher presence in periodicals by country, it does not quite help us understand the educational capabilities of any given country. There is a dire need for other data such as the relative presence of researchers, meaning the number of each nationality present in periodicals relative to the proportion of its population against the population of the Arab world as a whole. Thus, if the percentage of researchers present from a certain country is higher than the ratio of the country's population to the population of the Arab world, we can initially deduce that this country has above average productivity, and that the reverse is true.

### Level of Presence of Researchers Relative to Population Size\*

Figure 23

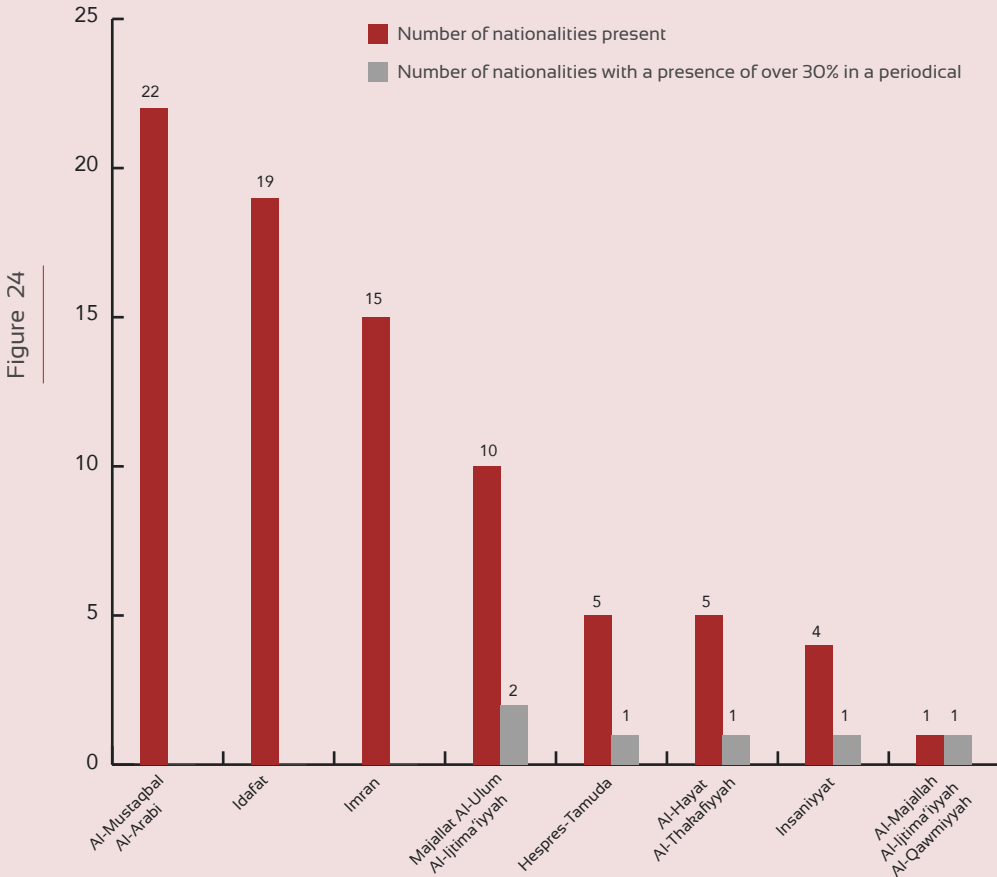


Source: Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
 \* 1 indicates that the volume of production in a country exactly matches the population size in that country.

Consequently, reflecting upon these proportions leads to a different perspective. We see a number of relatively small countries with a profusion of productivity exceeding their size, many times over, most notably Kuwait, Lebanon, Tunisia, Qatar, and Palestine. Other countries that produce Arab academics in numbers disproportionate to

population size, if in smaller ratios, include Jordan, Morocco, and Algeria. The rest of the countries produce at rates lower in proportion to their sizes, although the differences between them do have implications. Egypt, which is at the fore in absolute number of its citizens publishing in Arab scholarly periodicals, actually produces at a lower rate in

## The Plurality of Present Nationalities in 8 Arab Peer-reviewed Periodicals, 2010 - 2014\*



**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
\* Based on 732 articles

proportion to its population size, though not by much. At the bottom of the scale, we find countries where production volume is meager relative to population, such as Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen, and Sudan. We can also add those countries with no presence at all in this sample, including Bahrain, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Djibouti, Somalia, and Comoros. It is notable that these latter countries vary greatly in national wealth. This confirms our earlier proposition: the social sciences in their research form—and particularly those directed at an Arab audience—do not flourish simply due to national wealth, but rather due to interest in them and relative freedom of research. The latter factors are present in the countries at the forefront in this figure, although they vary in national wealth and the nature of local issues faced. However, there is no doubt that the latter are all more concerned with the social sciences than other countries, and that they do allow for more breathing room in that regard.

It is well known that scholarly periodicals anywhere will differ in terms of how well they represent researchers in their respective regions. This necessitates a careful examination of the content of each individual periodical to get a sense of its impact on the Arab world as a whole, and consequently the extent to which it is geographically limited. We note here that there is no clear relationship between the periodical's age and its influence. An old and respected periodical such as "Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi" is at the forefront with the highest numerical presence of researcher nationalities (22

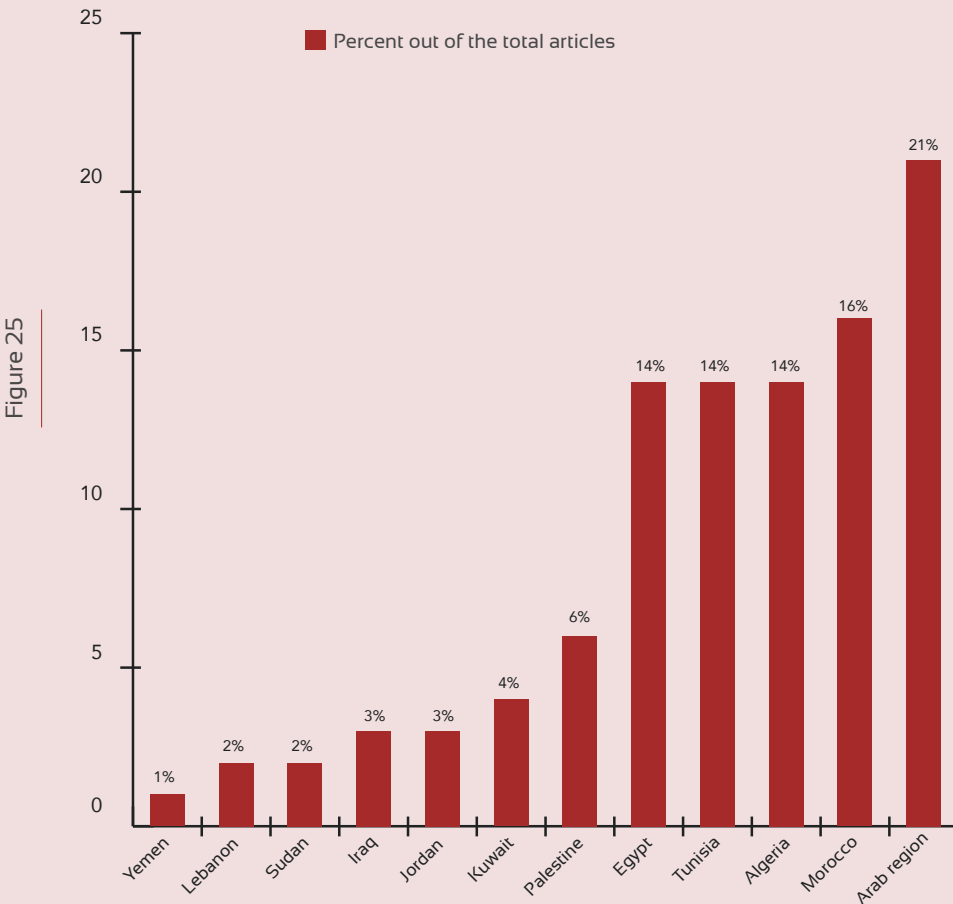
nationalities). Another notable healthy phenomenon there is the absence of hegemony by any nationality, such that that no single nationality is represented by more than 30% of the authors. There is also a high level of plurality in the most recently established periodical in our sample, "Imran", which publishes four times as many nationalities as far older periodicals (15 nationalities), also without any of them dominating, although Qatari researchers have the most distinguished presence at 25% of this periodical's authors. It is worth noting that the first two periodicals in our index of plurality ("Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi" and "Idafat") are issued from Lebanon. This demonstrates that there is indeed a close relationship not only between a relatively long history of freedom of research and quality, but also between freedom and pluralism. This relatively free space bore the fruit of two of the most open periodicals in the Arab world as a whole, that is, periodicals capable of attracting contributions from all over the Arab world.

It is not difficult to observe a major difference in plurality levels in the same region that has little to do with the age of the periodicals, but rather relates to their policies and their understanding of their audience. If we consider the two periodicals from our sample that are issued in Gulf States ("Imran" from Qatar and "Majallat Al-Ulum Al-Ijtima'iyyah" from Kuwait), it is clear that although the latter periodical published articles by authors from ten different nationalities, it is still marked by two particularly dominant nationalities; most of the researchers writing in it

are either from Kuwait or Egypt. The Egyptian “Al-Majallah Al-Ijtima’iyah Al-Qawmiyyah” comes in last in terms of plurality, as only Egyptian researchers wrote in it during the period of our monitoring. Furthermore, we note the limited pan-Arab influence

of the three Maghreb periodicals in our sample, despite their academic importance and long, respectable history. Only 4-5 nationalities are represented in each, and in each we see that researchers from the country of issue dominate the pages.

## Percent Distribution of Articles in 8 Arab Peer-reviewed Periodicals by Country and Region, 2010 - 2014\*



**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. “Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals”. January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
 \* Based on 504 articles

In the same context, the majority of the texts and articles (504 out of 732) focused on a specific geographic area of study, discussing and analyzing a certain country or region. This suggests that the theory or concept presented springs from a location-dependent context (even though it may be generalizable). In Figure 25

we omitted regions to which less than 0.5% of the total contributions were devoted. It is worth mentioning that the “Muslim World” was one of the regions omitted due to its miniscule presence as an analytic category (with only two articles out of a total of 504). This may seem strange based on the prevalent

**Distribution of Articles in 8 Arab Peer-reviewed Periodicals by Country, 2010 - 2014\***

Table 6

Periodicals Countries Included in the Study	Imran	Al-Hayat Al-Thakafiyyah	Al-Majallah Al-Ijtima'iyyah Al-Qawmiyyah	Idafat	Majallat Al-Ulum Al-Ijtima'iyyah	Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi	Insaniyyat	Hespres Tamuda	Total
Tunisia	6	49		7		5	2		69
Algeria	1			13	1	10	43		68
Morocco	9			16		9		48	82
Egypt	5		41	2	7	15			70
Qatar				1					1
Kuwait					22				22
Jordan	1			1	11	1			14
Palestine	4			9	2	15			30
Lebanon	1			5		6			12
Iraq				8		7			15
Sudan	1			1		7			9
Yemen	1				2	4			7
Arab World	3	9		12	1	78			103
Islamic World				1		1			2
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>504</b>

**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

usage of the “Muslim World” as a concept, but here we realize that Arab scholarly periodicals do not seem to pay much attention to it. Although this phenomenon may well be linked to our sample selection, there are no other indicators from other sources that affirm that the “Muslim World” (as an analytical concept and not as a handy expression) appears more prominently in any other sample. The reason may well be that Arab researchers do not view the concept of the “Muslim World” as sufficiently coherent socially—or at least as possessing enough common characteristics to warrant its analysis as a single entity.

In contrast, the concept of the “Arab world” has predominant presence as an analytic geographic focus despite the fact that this concept entails great differences if not conflicts. Nevertheless, the concept of the “Arab world” generally appears in the common Arab domain more frequently than does the “Muslim World”. The “Arab world’s” recent history makes it appear that it faces common challenges, or at the very least challenges that travel across the borders of the region’s countries in one form or the other. The concept also has a more interconnected institutional presence than can be claimed of the “Muslim World.”

Table 6 shows that countries that produce the greatest number of published researchers, including Egypt and the Arab Maghreb countries except Mauritania, are also the object of study to a larger extent than

others. Mokhtar El-Harras pointed out that most of the articles relating to a certain country were written by researchers from that country albeit in varying proportions. He concluded that two-thirds of the articles about Algeria and Morocco were written by researchers from these two countries, while Tunisian authors dedicated half of their articles to topics about Tunisia, and 45% of the articles written by Egyptian authors were about Egypt. These ratios recede in the Gulf States, where 40% of the articles written by Kuwaiti researchers were about Kuwait (keeping in mind the small size of the country and the grave issues plaguing the surrounding geographic area may make this percentage appear to be actually high). The highest level of interest in the general Arab surroundings is recorded in Qatar, where only one article out of 22 written by Qatari authors was about Qatar. The same applies to Lebanon, where only 12 articles out of a total of 71 written by Lebanese authors were about Lebanese affairs. It is also notable that regions currently in crisis fully occupy the concerns of the researchers hailing from those regions. For instance, we find that all the articles written about Sudan and Yemen were written by researchers from these two countries, while 30 out of 38 articles about Palestine were written by Palestinian authors.

However, such postulates linking the role of chronic national crisis with interest from local researches do not explain the tendency to focus on studying the homeland found

in researchers from other countries such as Morocco and Algeria. Dr. El-Harras presents some of his own propositions to explain this phenomenon. One concerns the weight of social science knowledge accumulated since the colonial era in the Maghreb countries, incentivizing continuity of research traditions. Add to this openness to researching social issues from political authorities for various reasons, which contributes to

giving researchers access to official statistics and documents, which in turn encourages the study of subjects that can be better documented.

Periodicals differ in levels of geographic openness. This is clearly demonstrated by the two periodicals issued from Lebanon, "Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi" and "Idafat", containing the greatest number of articles about other countries. Each of them

### Number of Countries Studied in 8 Arab Peer-reviewed Periodicals, 2010 - 2014\*

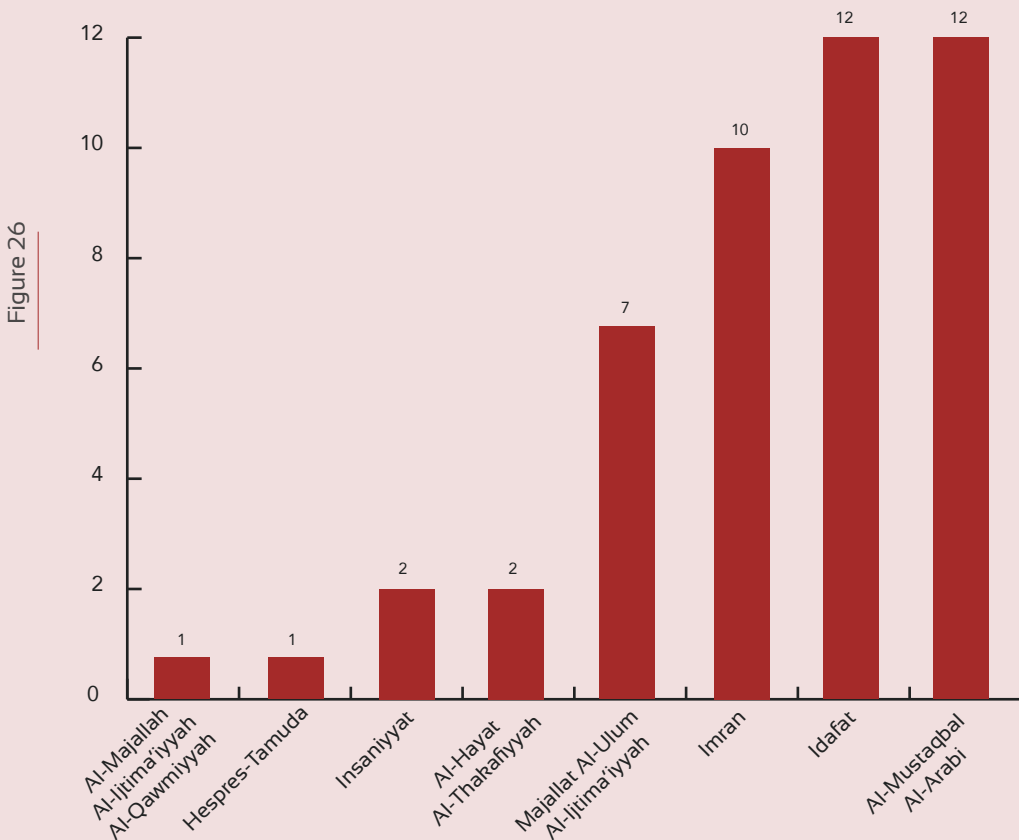


Figure 26

**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
 \* Based on 504 articles



contains articles about 12 out of 22 Arab countries, that is, a little more than half. They are followed by the newly-established "Imran", then «Majallat Al-'Ulum Al-Ijtima'iyah». This order is perfectly consistent with Figure 26 since these periodicals retain the greatest level of plurality in terms of researcher nationality. The rest of the figures are also consistent with Figure 26, demonstrating that multiplicity in researchers' national affiliations has a strong correlation to geographical multiplicity in research topics. We find that focus on the periodical's country of issue is a prevalent phenomenon in Maghreb periodicals, which mostly draw Maghrebi researchers. The same applies to Egypt's "Al-Majallah Al-Ijtima'iyah Al-Qawmiyyah" in Egypt which—withstanding its pan-Arab title—did not publish any articles about countries other than Egypt during the survey period (keeping in mind that during the same period Egyptian researchers did write about other Arab countries, but in other periodicals).

This may mean that the issue has to do with orientations and policies followed by the periodical or the authorities responsible for it, and not necessarily with the local researchers' interests or capabilities.

## Specializations and Topics

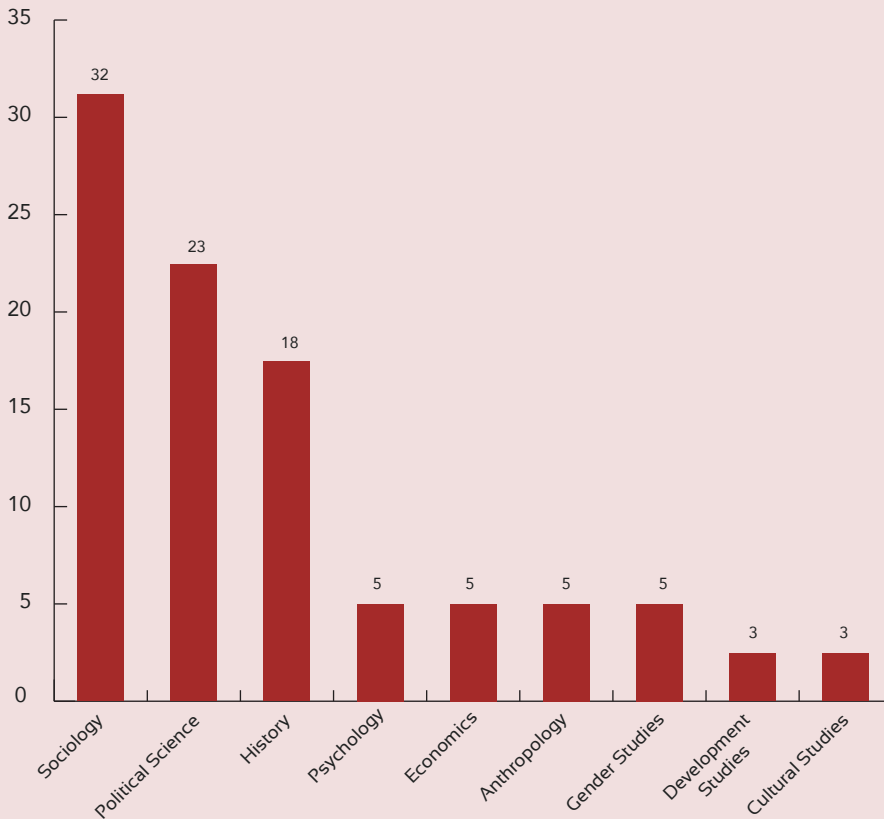
In our analysis of the presence of social science disciplines in Arab scholarly academic periodicals, in which we classified articles by

discipline and specialization, we find that despite certain numerical differences, the ratios of presence for each discipline are consistent with the corresponding ratios in Arab universities. The exception is economics, which is at the forefront in universities but which has a weak presence in the sample periodicals. This is likely due to our focus on periodicals that are open to the social sciences generally. This leads to poor representation of disciplines whose researchers prefer to publish in periodicals with exclusive specializations. There are several possible reasons for such specialized choices. One may be the existence of an academic community within the discipline itself that incentivizes researchers to intensify their connectedness with one another at the expense of their presence in the shared social science domains. There are, however, other possible factors for such closed specialized choices, such as a researcher's preference for complex, advanced techniques and methodologies, which does not enable communication with those outside the discipline. Another factor might be a preference for directing research towards decision-makers rather than a general scholarly domain shared with other disciplines.

The relatively large presence of certain marginalized disciplines such as anthropology may be linked to the lack of specialized periodicals for that discipline in the Arab world, compelling many specialists in this field

## Percent Distribution of Articles in 8 Arab scientific Peer-reviewed Periodicals by Discipline, 2010 - 2014\*

Figure 27



**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

\* Based on 732 articles

to publish their research in the available periodicals. We cannot ascertain which of the presented possibilities is most likely as this requires a separate study, perhaps a matter for later reports. This is especially the case since for this section we selected a sample with the unique capacity to inform about interactive fields for different social science disciplines.

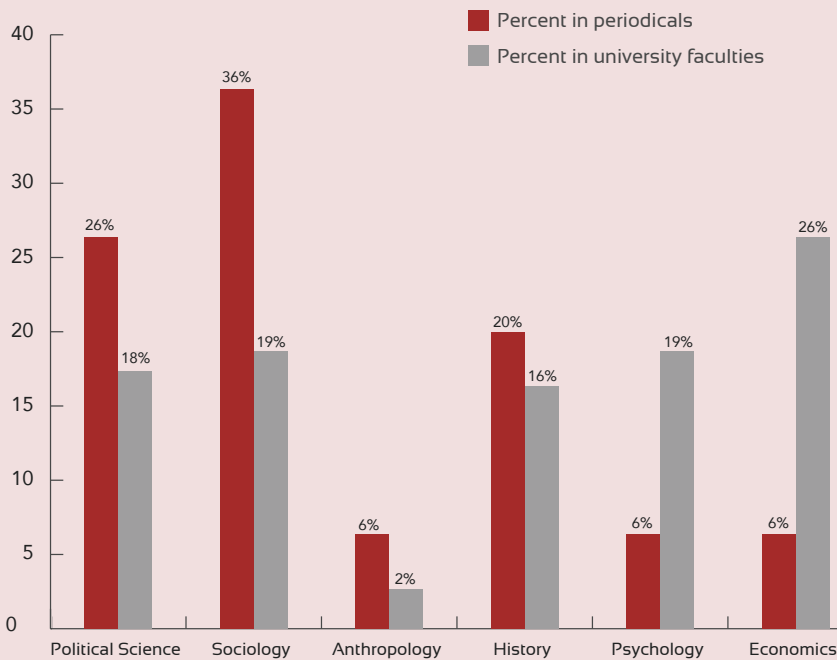
In this context, three disciplines take up the most space by far in shared social science periodicals: sociology, political science, and history. Together they account for almost three-quarters of the total articles, while psychology, economics, and anthropology do not account for more than 5% each. We also note that the presence of these disciplines is quantitatively comparable to

the presence of interdisciplinary studies (gender, development and cultural studies) which constitute 11% of the articles. If we exclude interdisciplinary studies and recalculate the percentages,

limiting them to the six traditional disciplines available as university departments, it becomes possible to compare the proportions in which those disciplines are present in periodicals and in the universities.

## Comparison of Percent Distributions of Disciplines in Periodicals versus in University Faculties

Figure 28



**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

Table 7 shows that the three disciplines that have the most commanding rates of presence in periodicals (history, sociology, and political science), exceed here their rate of presence in universities. This also applies to anthropology, which despite having very meager

presence in all domains enjoys a periodical presence that exceeds its university presence threefold. History has the nearest proportion of periodical presence in comparison to university presence, while sociology has the strongest relative periodical presence

## Variation in the Presence of Disciplines Between Periodicals and Universities

Table 7

	Political Science	Sociology	Anthropology	History	Psychology	Economics
Percentage in Periodicals: Percentage in University Faculties	18:26	19:36	2:6	16:20	19:6	26:6
Variation Level	1.44	1.9	3.0	1.25	0.32	0.23

**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

with double the percentage of its university presence. Economics definitely comes in last, with periodical presence under one-fourth the rate of its university presence. Similarly, psychology has periodical presence under one-third the rate of its university presence. If these metrics indicate anything, it definitely involves the degree to which there are opportunities for social science scholars to acquaint themselves with academic contributions in their shared domains—that is, in this sample.

That said, the above results lead to the conclusion that two disciplines (psychology and economics) are not present in sufficient density to provide specialists from other disciplines with the opportunity to regularly become familiar with their contributions. In contrast, we find four disciplines (political science, sociology, anthropology, and history) that reveal their nature much more to those outside the field.

Monitoring the most frequent research topics in scholarly periodicals, after excluding those scarcely addressed, yields the same results that will be tabulated later for newspapers and other types of periodicals during the survey period. The "Arab Spring" comes in the lead even before we add a group of related issues such as "reform" and "justice". These three topics combined account for 13% of the articles. If we add to them other closely related issues such as "democracy", "citizenship", and "civil society", the total percentage would jump to 20% of total articles handling the issue of political and social change at the macro level.

Moreover, there is considerable presence for women's issues, as in the case of newspapers that will be discussed later. The same applies to youth issues, which account for 8% of the articles. Also similarly to the case of newspapers, cultural periodicals, and others outlets, we note a weak presence of "globalization" as a topic.

However, we find topics that we do not see in other outlets, such as “the elite”, even though it is a minor presence.

We also notice the relative interest in the subject of “urbanization”.

This issue is linked, in our time, to other social and economic problems including development, displacement, and poverty, which—once added to the topic of urbanization—suggest that nearly 18% of articles are dedicated

**Most Frequent\* Topics in 8 Arab Peer-reviewed Periodicals, 2010 - 2014\***

Topic	Total Articles about Topic	Related Topics	Total Articles about Related Topics	Total Articles about Combined Topics	Rate of Combined Topics in Total Articles
Arab Spring, Revolution	65	Reform, Justice	9	74	13.3
Biographies	60			60	10.8
Women's Issues	48			48	8.6
Youth	45			45	8.1
Urbanization	44			44	7.9
Politics	43			43	7.7
Islam	31			31	5.6
Development	28	Displacement, Poverty	28	56	10.0
Democracy	20	Citizenship, Civil Society	16	36	6.4
New Technologies	18			18	3.2
Culture	16	Identity	7	23	4.1
Family	10	Childcare, Education Adolescence	31	41	7.3
Sectarianism	8			8	1.4
Health	8			8	1.4
Tribalism Bedouins	7	Village Issues	2	9	1.6
Elites	7			7	1.3
Globalization	7			7	1.3
Total				585	100

Table 8

**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. “Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals”. January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

\* Based on 732 articles

to addressing greater issues of development. In contrast, we must pause to take note of the relative lack of interest in communities classified as “traditional” or at least incompatible with urbanization, like rural and Bedouin communities. Although it is possible to address these communities from the point of view of developmental ambition, focus on non-urban communities still accounts for less than 2% of the total articles.

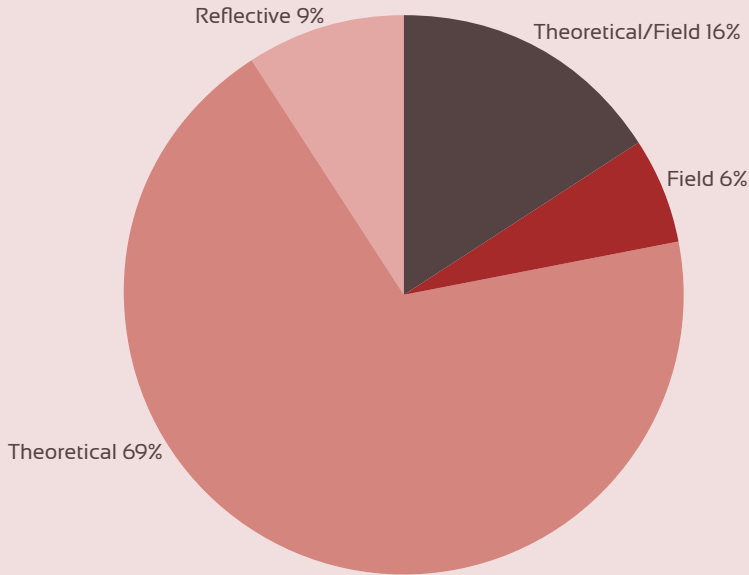
In parallel, there is an interest in family issues that we do not see in other types of outlets. This interest does not always appear directly, but emerges through adjacent interests such as adolescence, childcare, and education issues. It is also worth noting the presence of biographies as a vehicle for presenting ideas in approximately 11% of articles. This includes 60 articles about specific figures such as intellectuals, scientists, and historical characters, almost evenly distributed with 22 figures known at the Arab level, 21 known primarily at the local level, and 17 foreign figures. We should however point out that this interest in biographies is not consistent across periodicals. We observe great interest in this approach to presenting ideas in 3 out of 8 periodicals, little interest in 2 periodicals, and no interest at all in 3 other periodicals. These differences do not seem to be related to the periodical’s academic specialization, but it is clear in our survey sample that Gulf periodicals are not interested in biographies.

## Types of Research

Figure 29 classifies the articles in our sample according to type, including the presentation techniques used by Arab social science scholars in Arab academic periodicals. Each type of article has its own merits in raising a topic or an issue, although the notion of “science” generally entails that one scholar will find some presentation techniques to be more scientific than others, while another might find that the same presentation technique cannot be assessed without also assessing the merit of the objective for which it is being used. Classification by type is divided into four fundamental categories. First, there is the field-theoretical study, where the research hinges upon a field study that includes an introduction or theoretical discussion introducing the reader to the study’s scientific context as well as former academic contributions relevant to the topic. Second, in a pure field study, the researcher will immediately launch into the field study without providing theoretical input. The third type is the theoretical article, which focuses on a theoretical angle although it may analyze secondary statistics or data, that is, information not produced by the research itself but obtained from already existing sources. Finally, the reflective article, that possesses a review character, takes into consideration a social phenomenon in its general features or presents some of the research trends relating to it.

## Percent Distribution of Articles in 8 Arab scientific Peer-reviewed Periodicals by Type of Research, 2010 - 2014\*

Figure 29



**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
\* Based on 732 articles

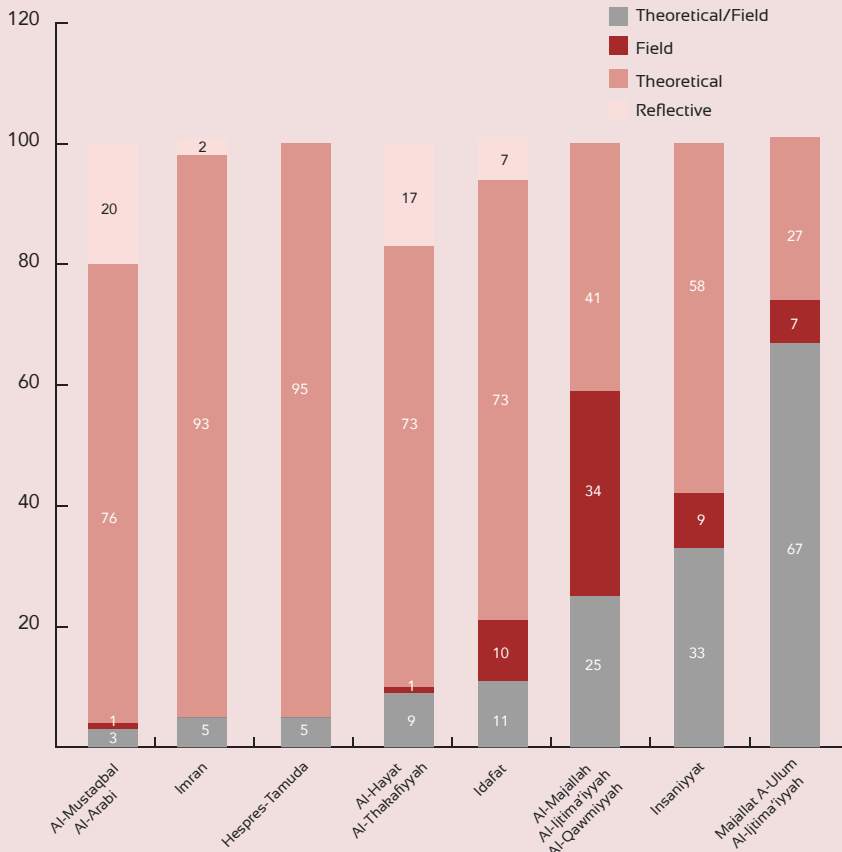
There is a clear prevalence of theoretical articles, exceeding two-thirds of the total. This high proportion may be attributed to the difficulties facing fieldwork in the Arab world, which encompass security obstacles as well as political, logistic, and financial difficulties, although field work is one of the most significant sources of fresh information and innovative analysis in the social sciences. Despite this, we note that field studies, including both pure field studies and those framed theoretically, do not exceed 22% of the total articles.

A close look at the periodicals individually reveals the extent of

variance between them. Three quarters of our sample periodicals tend to publish theoretical articles in proportions exceeding half of the total articles and, in the majority of periodicals, the rate of theoretical articles exceeds two-thirds of the total. Despite the overwhelming prevalence of theoretical articles, we see that reflective articles (which are the most similar to theoretical ones, except for not incorporating original research) have absolutely no presence in half of the periodicals, and a modest presence in the other half, such that at their highest, in "Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi", they do not exceed 20% of articles.

Proportion of Articles in 8 Arab scientific Peer-reviewed Periodicals by Type of Research, 2010 - 2014\*

Figure 30



**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
\* Based on 732 articles

However, there are some significant exceptions to this trend, as in the case of "Majallat Al-Ulum Al-Ijtima'iyah," which displays an inverse phenomenon such that field-theoretical work prevails in over two-thirds of the articles. It is followed by "Insaniyyat", although to a significantly lower extent, with the field-theoretical category comprising only one-third of its content, then

"Al-Majallah Al-Ijtima'iyah Al-Qawmiyyah" where field-theoretical articles do not exceed 25%. After these, field-theoretical work retreats into meager rates in the remaining periodicals. Here we must note that pure fieldwork is in fact conducive to being transformed into field-theoretical work with a little effort, overall improving its academic quality. In this connection,



Short Texts in 8 Arab Peer-reviewed Periodicals by Country, 2010 - 2014\*

Table 9

	Imran	Al-Hayat Al-Thakafiyyah	Al-Majallah Al-Ijtima'iyyah Al-Qawmiyyah	Majallat Al-Ulum Al-Ijtima'iyyah	Idafat	Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi	Insaniyyat	Hespres Tamuda	Total
Reviews Summaries	30	2	19	58	67	53	9	20	258
Conference Reports	3	-	4	-	3	5	1	-	16
Discussions, Interviews	1	1	-	-	6	15	-	-	23

Source: Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
 \* Based on 732 articles

periodicals editorial boards and referees are crucial to elevating the scientific standard of the research being published; they encourage researchers that have conducted valuable fieldwork to develop their work to further benefit knowledge. This is a crucial issue for periodicals where field articles prevail over field-theoretical studies such as "Al-Majallah Al-Ijtima'iyyah Al-Qawmiyyah", where the pure field category is present in more than one-third of the articles. In this case the raw material for innovative science is present, but has not yet been transformed into mature scientific material.

Periodicals also vary in their employment of not only articles, but also short texts such as dialogues, reviews, and reports of academic conferences to complement their goals. We see, for instance, that interviews and debates are almost absent from all periodicals except "Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi" and "Idafat", which as previously mentioned are the periodicals most open to the

study of the entire region of the Arab world and to receiving contributions from Arab social science scholars from all countries. These two periodicals stand out in their relative interest in interviews and debates, due to their greater ability to form scholarly groups on the level of the Arab world such that the capacity for dialogue becomes a major source of their viability.

The vast majority of short texts are dedicated to book reviews while a few others are summaries of university dissertations. Most of the latter can be found in Al-Majallah Al-Ijtima'iyyah Al-Qawmiyyah, where they exceed the number of book reviews. The number of these texts provides us with an idea about the periodical's role in drawing attention to new publications, a role most clearly assumed by "Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi", "Idafat", and "Majallat Al-Ulum Al-Ijtima'iyyah". We can also easily observe the scant coverage of academic conferences, perhaps due to how few there may be in the Arab world, or to mutual inattention between conferences organizers and the

editors of periodicals, or to disparities in priorities and policies. All these possibilities require verification before any conclusions about them are drawn and assessed.

## The language of references and the issue of research fields

In addition to the above factors, the language of the references used in the articles provides a glimpse of the breadth of the academic field in which the researcher is involved. We find that the majority of the articles in the sample (57%) use Arabic references in addition to references in at least one foreign language. Only 13% of the articles use exclusively Arabic references while

a larger number (21%) disregards Arabic altogether. It seems there is a linguistic disconnect between two segments of researchers who together account for more than one-third of scholarly periodicals' articles. It is safe to say that the researchers who use exclusively Arabic references (except for the ones that are translated) may be disconnected from the global scholarly field, while those who do not employ Arabic references at all may be disconnected from the Arab field and are exclusively concerned with research questions arising from theoretical or methodological priorities outside the Arab world. However, the proportions of these divisions vary from one periodical to another.

**Percent Distribution of Articles in 8 Arab scientific Peer-reviewed Periodicals by Language of References, 2010 - 2014\***

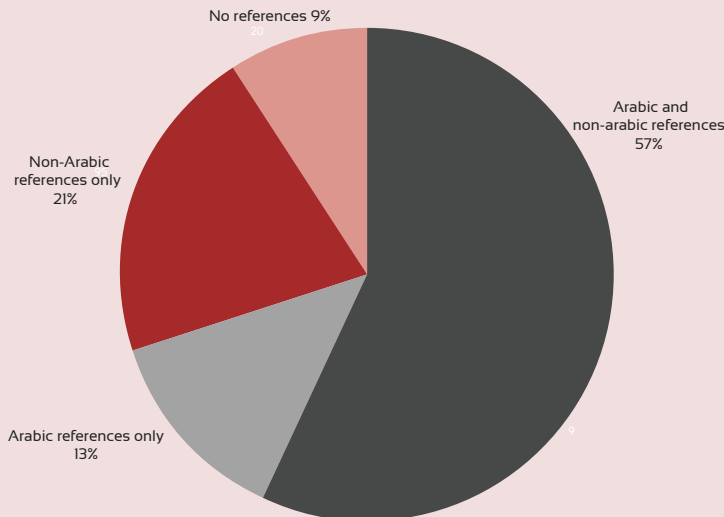
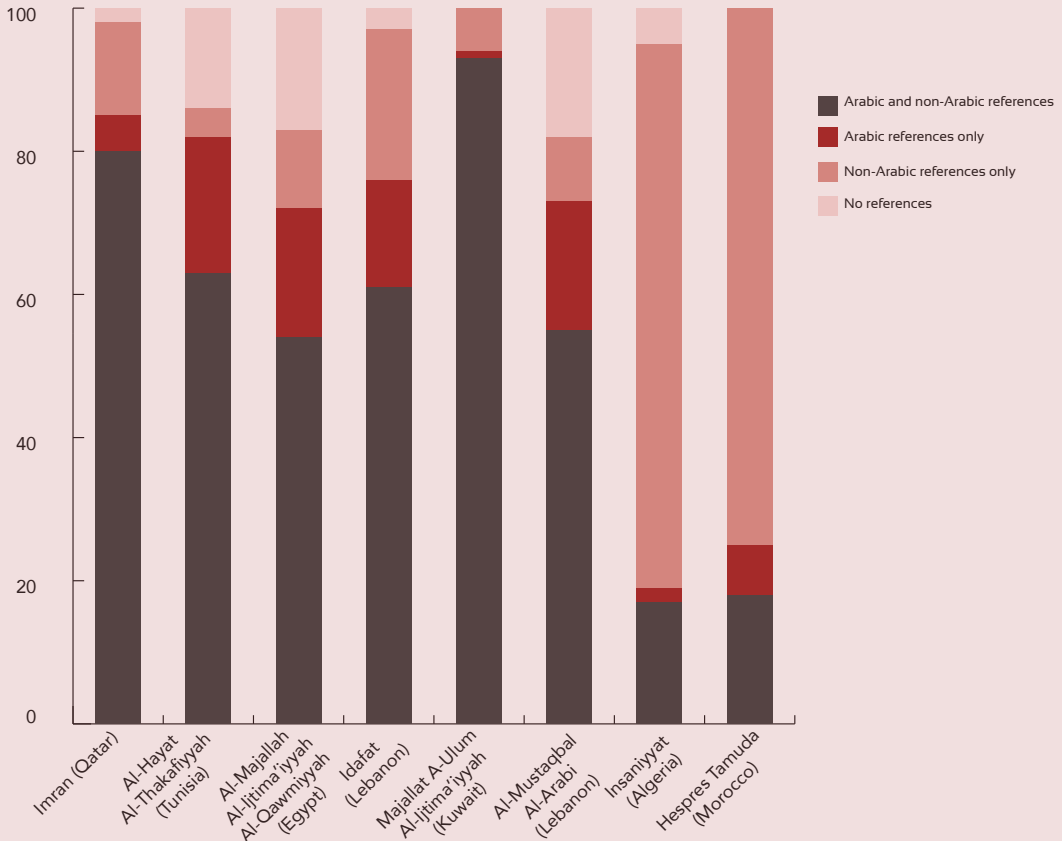


Figure 31

**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
\* Based on 732 articles

Proportion of Articles in 8 Arab scientific Peer-reviewed Periodicals by Language of References, 2010 - 2014\*

Figure 32



Source: Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
 \* Based on 732 articles

A careful examination of these sample study summaries reveals significant differences between periodicals, which indicates that the language problem and all its related issues are not omnipresent. Three quarters of the articles from the two Algerian and Moroccan periodicals do not employ any Arabic references at all, in contrast with the Tunisian periodical, whose

references language is consistent with that of Arab Mashreq periodicals. If we concede that linguistic plurality in references is an indicator of broader scholarly capacity, it is fair to say that this is more exhibited in the Gulf periodicals, with 93% of the articles in "Majallat Al-Ulum Al-Ijtima'iyah" and 80% of the articles in "Imran" employing multilingual references.

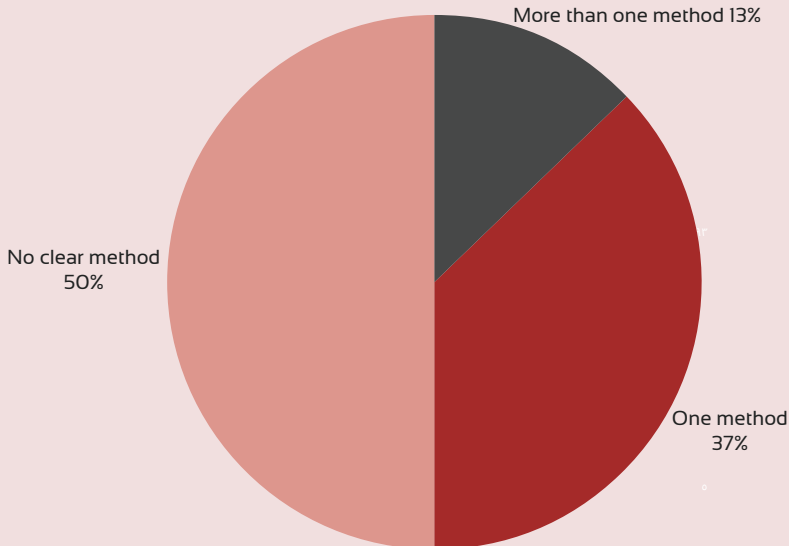
## Research Techniques

Given the large proportion of theoretical articles in Arab academic periodicals, we find that many do not indicate a specific research technique or methodology. Out of 732 articles only 366 (50%) explained the techniques and methodologies therein. These can be divided further into two types: articles that employ a single specified technique (37% of the total articles) and those which employ more than one technique (13% of the total articles). If we concede that the credibility

of an academic perspective increases to a certain extent as a function of plurality in research methodologies, especially when each methodology fills the gaps left by others, we conclude that the most scientific methodologies constitute a minority of periodical articles, while the least scientific methodologies constitute the majority. We also note clear differences between the periodicals in the number of techniques employed, with 40% of the articles published in 3 periodicals employing more than one technique, in comparison with 30% in 3 others.

**Percent Distribution of Articles in 8 Arab scientific Peer-reviewed Periodicals by Research Methods, 2010 - 2014\***

Figure 33



**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
\* Based on 366 articles

## Research Methods Used\*

Table 10.b

Research Methods Used in All Periodicals	% Distribution of Research Methods Used in All Periodicals
Statistical Analysis	26.6
Survey	21.5
Measurement	10.6
Experiments	8.4
Observation	7.3
Content Analysis	7.3
Interview	6.6
Comparison	2.6
Historical Analysis	2.2
Document Analysis	1.8
Case Study	1.5
Image Analysis	1.1
Biography	0.7
Other	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Al-Harras, Al-Mukhtar. 2015. "Evaluation of Social Science Periodicals". January. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

\* Based on 732 articles

## Research Methods Used\*

Table 10.a

Periodicals Publishing Articles Using More than One Research Method	Number of Articles Using More than One Research Method	Percentage of Articles Using More than One Research Method of all Periodical Articles with Clear Research Methods During Study Period
Majallat Al-Ulum Al-Ijtima'iyyah	25	34.7
Al-Majallah Al-Ijtima'iyyah Al-Qawmiyyah	19	41.3
Idafat	17	40.5
Insaniyyat	14	42.4
Imran	6	20.7
Al-Hayat Al-Thakafiyyah	5	31.2
Hespres Tamuda	3	30.0
Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi	3	11.5

Here we note the importance of secondary statistical analysis (of numerical data not produced by the researcher but available from other sources). Arab researchers also give special attention to questionnaires or surveys, while we note a relative dearth of other methodologies relevant to fieldwork such as observation and interviews, and even more so of methodologies of crucial importance to the social sciences such as comparisons and case studies. This leads us to the conclusion that the issue of research methodologies and how to combine them poses one of the most important challenges facing social science research in the Arab world.

## Joint Research

In conclusion, according to the above data, social sciences in the Arab world suffer from the weakness of scholarly communities, not only as real entities but also as aspirations. This weakness is reflected in the scarcity of the scholarly periodicals issued by organized scholarly associations, the dearth in organized meetings between social science scholars in the Arab world, and their fragmentation over various global and local currents without any solid research relationships between them. One indicator of this weakness of community is the paucity of joint research endeavors in the Arab world. No more than 6% of our sample articles were based on joint research efforts, whereas if we look at the tables of contents of significant international academic periodicals in the social sciences, we find that approximately half the articles are published jointly. It is worth mentioning that the Kuwaiti "Majallat Al-Ulum Al-Ijtima'iyah" stands out in this respect, having published 18 joint research articles, 41% of the total joint research articles of our sample, although individual research still dominates.

## Social Sciences and Cyberspace: The Model of Aranthropos

Arab academic periodicals, including the ones surveyed, do not seem to be particularly interested in electronic presence. Nevertheless, we do find some independent academic initiatives that limit their presence to

cyberspace and present themselves as pioneering examples in using this space for academic purposes. In some cases, e-publishing has additional scientific objectives, the most important of which is modernizing higher education in the Arab world and making it more accessible, enabling students to easily access books, articles, and other resources relevant to their field of study, in addition to providing explanations about social science concepts, history, and schools of thought. We do however sense a weakness in creative investment in this domain. For example: although widely accessible databases are one of the most significant innovations with the capacity to democratize, modernize, and expand academic domains, we find that they still have limited impact in the Arab world. Many of the existing databases are merely tables of titles that do not provide the reader with the opportunity to become acquainted with the texts, their summaries, or their explanations. Otherwise, access fees far exceed the capacities of most Arab libraries, much less individuals.

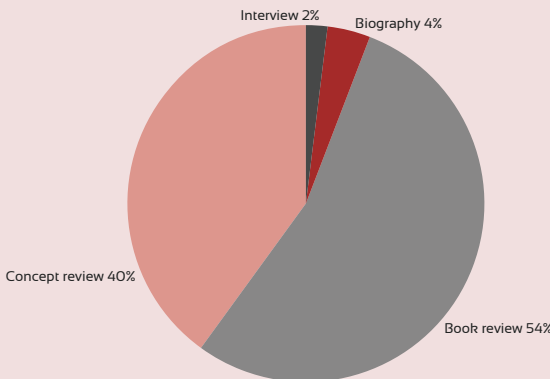
In return, we do observe the beginnings of some promising models for such websites, even though they are not yet in the form of databases. An example is Aranthropos ([www.aranthropos.com](http://www.aranthropos.com)), an Algerian website established in 2010 as the first Arab site specializing in anthropology and social anthropology. It has become well known among anthropology university students throughout the Arab world. When we asked 10 PhD anthropology students at the Lebanese University how

familiar they were with this website, all of them replied that they follow the website regularly and consider it an auxiliary knowledge platform of in their field of specialization, providing them with the latest references and specialized periodicals, connecting them to similar sites, and providing access to significant if not essential methodology.

The Aranthropos website, being atypical, provides a significant complement to the offerings of academic periodicals. This is due to the site being not only distinguished by its academic character but also by its encyclopedic perspective, even though it is limited to one social science discipline. We observe a significant presence for academic book reviews unavailable on any other website, and this is consistent with the encyclopedic understanding of the website initially created by researcher Mabrouk Boutagouga, who aimed at placing an entire academic discipline within the grasp of the readers, rather than limiting them to analyses of particular social dilemmas.

A careful observation of this website yields another rare phenomenon, although it is part of the encyclopedic self-understanding of the site: the presentation of content from periodicals (26% of what we classified as book reviews were in fact reviews of periodicals), particularly specialized or cultural Arabic periodicals, approached as parts of a cohesive knowledge system. Thus we see here that cyberspace can contribute to the formation of a nucleus of a scholarly community enriched by an interconnected epistemic background, even if this community does not exist in a formal institutional form. The website does not offer research as much as it offers an “epistemic universe” easily connectible to other epistemic universes. Once we complement this connectedness with the useful services offered by the site, such as free downloads of books and articles and explanations of specific anthropological concepts (at the rate of one concept every couple of months), the result is a rich experience utilizing the various potentials of cyberspace, and certainly beyond mere reproduction of print material.

Types of Articles in Aranthropos, 2013 - 2014



**Source:** Kasr, Ubadah. 2015. *Presence of Social Sciences in E-magazines in the Arab Region*. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

Figure 34

# Public Frameworks: Civil Society and the Public Sphere

## Introduction

The public sphere holds a special importance in social science analyses. That importance has only increased with the surge of modern communication technologies that have intensified the use of social networking websites and made it possible for users to become acquainted with new realms of knowledge and social circles which only a generation ago would have been virtually inaccessible and completely undiscoverable. Traditionally considered the foundation of liberty in social life (Habermas, 1991), the public sphere is what lies beyond the bounds of the family, and allows the individual to communicate with others outside private contexts such as the home, and outside the domain of official institutions. Jürgen Habermas, in his classic study of the public sphere's emergence in Europe, considered cafés, clubs, and the free press the best examples of the public sphere in the age of modernity. But he also linked their existence to the growth of the bourgeoisie as a class in society, and this class' need for more open social communication than was needed by the old self-segregating aristocracy.

Many commentators such as Craig Calhoun and Armando Salvatore have criticized this notion of the

public sphere as being limited to the European experience. They noted that it failed to account for other historical contexts, where other types of social experience had a purpose or result that were similar to what the public sphere is thought to achieve, i.e. fostering a sense of "public opinion" through free dialogue premised on the assumption of a human capacity to persuade and willingness to be persuaded.

An examination of the social history of Muslim societies should set the stage for a discussion of the preponderant role played by religious scholars who maintained an organic relationship to society (as opposed to Caliphs or rulers whose relationship with it was purely that of political authority) in acquainting the community in which they lived with their own understanding of Islam. In the centuries following the "Islamic golden age", as it is typically called, different Sufi traditions prevailed until they became an integral part of the "natural" religion of the masses. The same applies to independent trade guilds. In all of these cases we see epistemic activity and social movements not ruled by a centralized political authority, and which did not require unanimous agreement as to creed or scriptural interpretation.



Although these phenomena all had a religious character, they also connected with social needs such as education and healthcare. The considerable presence of the system of Awqāf (Islamic endowments) was one of the most important non-governmental ways of catering to social needs. Indeed, this remained the state of affairs until the Awqāf were either appropriated or scaled back by modern governments. It is in these relationships between social formations on the one hand and the society's institutional structure on the other (such as in the historical system of the Awqāf), that it is possible to explore one of the most important aspects of the relationship between what contemporary social sciences capture in the two interconnected modern terms: "public sphere" and "civil society".

The modern era has seen increasing interest in these terms due to the presumed relationship between them and various vital issues, of which three stand out in particular: 1- the requirements of a democratic system. 2- The build-up of political, social, and economic problems intractable to any single central solution. 3- The increasing momentum of demands for participation, which have recently taken the form of revolution and all-out uprisings.

First, on the issue of democracy: a common view in political science asserts that a democracy's durability or fragility is closely linked to that of its civil society, the assumption being that a strong civil society reduces the

possibility of, and the incentives toward, government hegemony. Furthermore, a strong civil society helps provide more guidance for the behavior of political parties, as the rationalism of civil society checks or exposes the parties' otherwise demagogic tendencies or pursuit of narrow interests. It also stands as axiomatic that a democracy would be no more than form without substance if not coupled with a free press in particular and a vibrant public sphere in general.

Second, with the end of the Cold War and the beginning of what has come to be known as the "age of globalization", many nations saw a regress in the central state's ability to deal with the various economic, cultural, and political trends overtaking them from abroad. The state moreover has in many instances admitted its inability to solve social problems by centralized means, especially when the state relied on foreign loans or aid. As this crisis dragged on, the state increasingly came to depend on the private sector to indirectly manage all matters through its presumed ability to increase general social wealth. It is this thesis that has come to be known as neoliberalism. Parallel to this theory, other suggestions have arisen regarding the role of civil society (as a non-government framework) to propose or implement creative, non-regulatory solutions to social problems. This trend may be consistent with increasing criticism of the disastrous results of certain central development projects that have not solicited the participation of presumably affected

communities, let alone allowing them to express their opinions on the matter. It is also consistent with the criticism of the bureaucratic nature of central planning that does not interact with society, and concomitantly the increased sense that central planning lacks transparency and is linked with corruption, which was one of the chief grievances raised in the slogans of the Arab Spring.

Third, based on the above, the emergence of demands for wider participation can be understood as an expression of mounting suspicion of great numbers as to the ability of authoritarian states to deal with intractable chronic problems. That was especially the case wherever the government itself, through its ever-increasing corruption and irresponsibility, was transformed into an ever-increasing burden on society.

Throughout the period preceding the Arab Spring, participatory demands were pressed through both civil society organizations and the public sphere (which had been continuously expanding since the 1990s) via far-reaching new means such as satellite channels and, later, cyberspace. These modern technologies enhanced the sense among many segments of society, in the youth in particular, that the ordinary person belonged to the world as an interactive and influencing entity within it. The ordinary person was not merely a passive witness awaiting salvation at the hands of detached higher powers. There is one fundamental difference between this

feeling at this period and a comparable one that predominated in the days when "Sawt Al-Arab" [Voice of the Arabs] radio station dominated the Arab public sphere during Nasser's rule in Egypt. It lies in the large number of social communication technologies and platforms in the current era, so that it is no longer possible for a single radio station to dominate the entire scene, despite the varying levels of influence exercised by the different communication platforms today.

This tripartite set of contemporary issues facing the general socio-political atmosphere (the demands of democracy, the decline of the state's ability to be responsive to society while simultaneously increasing its investment in means of coercion, as well as the growth of participatory demands), reveals particular facets of civil society and the public sphere in the modern era, and suggests certain roles for the social sciences in it. It is clear that all the aforementioned problems pertain in one way or the other to the dilemmas of change in all dimensions: political, cultural, social and economic.

All the multifaceted avenues of grand change known to history have been connected to an epistemic change, specifically the spread of new ways of perceiving reality. What is today called "scientific thought" is one of these aspects of knowledge linked, in one way or another, to the requisites of change, even though such thought is by no means the only form of change-oriented knowledge.

Looking outside the usual institutional contexts of science and research as we currently understand it, that is, outside universities and research institutions, we may propose that modern (or at least non-traditional) social frameworks that offer the individual new modes of communication at will (in the manner of civil society and the public sphere), are able to assimilate scientific thought as a means to achieve their ends. This in spite of the fact that scientific thought in such frameworks may come in a rather different guise than the one it does in purely academic or scientific institutions.

## Civil Society

Some Arab researchers distinguish between “civil society” (al-mujtamaa al-madani) and “non-governmental society” (al-mujtamaa al-ahli), viewing the latter as an expression of traditional social institutions such as religious establishments and charity organizations and other institutions which in reality are built on familial, tribal, sectarian, or local lines, whereas civil society per se is usually viewed as a product of modernity. The assumption here is that civil society is composed of institutions that are open to all who believe in their principles, and that do not base themselves on traditional social relationships so much as give priority to general principles that enjoin democracy and free choice and are concerned with human rights and individual liberties (Karajah, 2007). However, the sociologist Ahmad Ba'albaki during our interview with him expressed doubt about the applicability

of the notion of “civil society” to Arab reality. He held that many of the so-called civil society organizations in the Arab world are in fact manifestations of non-governmental society, especially in cases where there is a lack of turnover in the organization’s administration or where clear-cut standards or regulations for membership are absent.

However, the reality of the Arab world is much like that of anywhere else: the term “civil society” usually embraces great differences in management systems and in the degree of openness to society as a whole. We found moreover that in many cases the boundary between “civil” and “non-governmental” society is by no means clear, nor do we see any impossibility in transforming a non-governmental society into a civil one, or the reverse. The possibility of an institution’s transformation from one type to the other depends on factors that are both specific to the local reality and constantly susceptible to change. These factors may include the emergence of modernizing personages within a traditional context that compel traditional organizations to adopt the general precepts of modernity; a popular movement that generates novel ideas and practices; a common threat that leads to coalescence (or at the very least coordination) between different social ensembles resulting in new common practices; or the degeneration of the ruling political regime (as happens in cases of war and revolutions) that compels various social ensembles to adopt new social roles; or the proliferation of new

ideas and ideologies (or old ones for that matter) via the public sphere. Other factors may also come to play. Therefore, we can broadly define civil society as the totality of independent social institutions that are based on voluntary association and organize themselves outside the purview of the state and of political parties.

### Methodology of Research

What is the role of the social sciences in a civil society? This question aspires to ascertain to what, if any, extent scientific thought influences social activities organized outside the framework of the state and political parties. The social activities we have in mind are those that aim for a clear change pertaining to a specific issue. This vision means that civil society is composed of institutions that differ in size, influence and capability, as well as the types of issues they focus on and the nature of the political atmosphere in which they operate. **Therefore, we deemed it appropriate to sample five organizations whose characteristics differ in terms of the issues they are concerned with, as well as the context of their existence, in order to understand the role of the social sciences in their work. Due consideration was given to such crucial issues as development, social change, and gender in our choice of organizations. We also decided that the organizations should be geographically diversified. They were selected from four Arab countries with distinct characteristics (Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia) as well as one organization**

**whose activities are directed at more than one country. Accordingly, we solicited a detailed study of a sample of five organizations: 1) The Arab NGO Network for Development; 2) Al-Qaws (based in Palestine, concerned with issues of sexual and gender diversity); 3) KAFA (based in Lebanon, and concerned with combating violence against, and exploitation of, women); 4) Al-Nahda (based Saudi Arabia, a women's charity organization); 5) The Arab Forum For Alternatives (based in Egypt, concerned with scientific research related to issues of change). The study of these organizations aimed to explore three things: the degree to which civil society organizations rely on social sciences to achieve their ends; these organizations' relationship with social science institutions, most especially in universities; and their ability to influence the society to which they orient themselves.**

The overall conclusions of the study showed that all civil society organizations, not only employ but, actually produce social science in one way or the other, albeit in various forms calibrated to their objectives. One such form is contracting local specialists in the social sciences to conduct studies of specific issues relevant to the organization's work. Furthermore, the personnel working in civil society organizations is comprised of a high proportion of graduates from social science departments, including those with bachelors' degrees, meaning that civil society has become an important part of the job market for Arab social sciences specialists. In addition, although

some organizations have considerable international connections, seldom do Arab civil society organizations consult foreign experts, with the exception of cases requiring comparative studies.

It seems to us that there are three types of general purposes underlying civil society organizations' use of the social sciences:

1. Practical: that is, helping the organization program or run its activities, determine its priorities, or augment the competence with which it offers services to a certain segment of the public.
2. Documentary: that is, documenting the social problems that the organization deals with, thereby reinforcing its *raison d'être*.
3. Epistemic: that is, exploring the relationship between the organization's core issues and other social issues. This may help shed light on different ways to present the organization's message to the public, or to decision makers, or in other contexts, thus boosting the organization's ability to influence the local status quo.

Generally speaking, and in most cases, social sciences in civil society follow an applied trajectory, though there is some interest in theory, intellectual issues, and conceptual definition. Some organizations do not publish their studies, but use them internally for programmatic purposes. However, most are in fact interested in communicating with a wider public

through the publication of their studies either in print or electronic form, especially in countries that maintain a certain margin for freedom of research. However, despite civil society's obvious interest in the social sciences, we found no robust relationship between civil society organizations and local universities.

In general, these relationships take the form of a personal connection (often a temporary one) with a member of a university's teaching faculty. Such relationships seldom take a programmatic institutional form, however. This is due to the difference in the nature of work in the two fields in question and a lack of the time available to faculty members, as well as the universities' lack of interest in, or lack of means for, providing incentives for the teaching staff to employ their knowledge or expertise in civic projects outside the university. That said, university students in the social sciences appear to have a much stronger relationship with civil society. The students deal with civil society organizations directly in order to conduct field studies, which are often beneficial to the students, and sometimes to the organization as well.

There is therefore, and in general, a relationship between the ways civil society employs social sciences, and its local influence (although there are other factors related to such influence). The fields within which this influence is exercised differ from case to case and according to the nature of the social and political context in which

the civil society functions. However, in our analysis we can distinguish six different types of influence, though they overlap:

1- General influence, which we particularly notice in discussions in the public sphere in which there is a role for evidence-based views, particularly where the evidence requires some type of research.

2- Scientific influence, which is to say the acquisition through research of more scientific material, previously unavailable to the organization, regarding one of its key issues.

3- Policy-making influence, though limited to cases where public policies are to some degree open, and under specific circumstances that allow civil society to exercise that influence, as was the case recently with the issue of violence against women in Lebanon.

4- Practical influence, making the organization's projects more effective, the clearest example of which is found in charity organizations.

5- Socially formative influence, when the knowledge provided by the organization instills in a number of disparate individuals a sense of belonging to a new and original group. A prime example of this is the issue of sexual orientation in the current Arab moment, alongside other issues of general concern.

6- Civic influence, rooted in how the knowledge accumulated through

the organization's work transforms its audience, or at least part of it, into critical activists who understand "citizenship" as a call for participation.

This ensemble of influences leads us to conclude that civil society in fact generates what we may call "quasi-scientific communities". The importance of this observation becomes clear in light of what has been said in another context within this report about the general weakness of the Arab scientific community, and its absence in coherent academic forms. But in this case we notice that the ways in which civil society actors tend to employ science, encourages the generation of communities centered around issue-specific knowledge. Such communities remain intact and they have the opportunity to draw in larger audiences, by continually investing in this knowledge. We must point out here that the concept of a "quasi-scientific" community does not undermine their seriousness, the legitimacy of the knowledge they produce, or their right to exist and propagate; quite the opposite, in fact. Rather, the label's purpose is to highlight and acknowledge their social importance, and therefore propose approaches appropriate for their study and the evaluation of their role in society. To avoid excessive generalizations and misunderstandings, the concept of the "quasi-scientific" community must be distinguished at the outset from that of the "scientific" community in its specialized form.

Indeed, we find that in the Arab reality “quasi-scientific” communities are more coherent, influential, and widely present than scientific ones.

## Social Sciences in Cultural Periodicals

Cultural periodicals play an important role in the public cultural and intellectual domains. They tend to house at the same time specialized academic thought and cross-disciplinary contributions. Therefore, the intended audience of such periodicals is an educated one, including academic circles but is not necessarily limited to them. Such an audience is usually characterized by its comprehensive interest in philosophical ideas, current scholarly concepts, literary innovations, and generally all that which is novel in intellectual life.

Based on this, a study of cultural periodicals gives us an idea as to the nature of the social sciences’ traction among the cultured intellectual public, in a field where social sciences are present side by side with contributions in literature, literary and academic criticism, and philosophy. These contributions address intellectual interests varying in space and time from the global to the local, from heritage to contemporaneity. These may be compared to widely circulating magazines and newspapers, where the study of the presence of social sciences gives us an idea about the nature and size of the social sciences’ in the public sphere in its broadest scope. In contrast, the study of the presence

of social sciences in the cultural domain gives us an idea about their nature and proliferation in circles that play a major role in defining society’s culture, in setting the standards of cultural debates within it, in defining the make-up of the educated person, and in connecting that person to an intellectual network that affords him a firm identity: as part of a social stratum nourished by depth exposure, across disciplines, into the study of events and concepts. Therefore, we limited our definition of cultural periodicals to those that published content that could be described as intellectual, but not academically specialized. Our definition also indicated that the content should be geared towards audiences interested in intellectual matters and capable of reading at a deeper level of analysis than that afforded by more widely circulated magazines.

**The study included a sample of five regularly published periodicals characterized by a relatively wide presence in intellectual circles in the Arab world, though we did take into account differences in the periodicals’ ages, sizes, frequencies, intellectual orientations, ideologies, and form of publication. Below, we present the general result of our survey (Ali, 2015) encompassing five years from the beginning of 2010 to the end of 2014. The periodicals sample included the following: “Ibdāa” from Egypt, “Afkār” from Jordan, “Kitābāt Muaāsira” from Lebanon, “Al-Thaqāfa Al-Jadīda” from Iraq, and “Al-Kalima” issued in London and distributed electronically. For the purposes of this**

survey, we adopt a definition of social science material generally similar to the one we used in the public sphere and which is summarized in the Methods and Tools chapter.

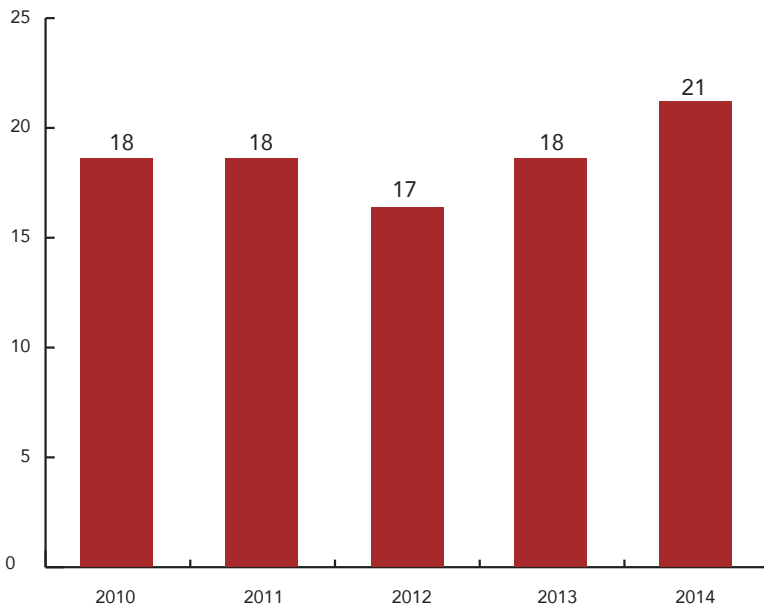
Percentage of Presence

The first fact we may observe is the persistence in the presence of the social sciences in cultural periodicals in general, at an average of about 20% of the periodicals' total pages over the years surveyed. There is, however, a sizeable variation in this average both between different individual periodicals and over time within each periodical,

reflecting different levels of interest in the social sciences at different times. It is, however, necessary to broaden the scope of the sample if we were to verify what we consider for the time being to be preliminary observations. These observations indicate that the highest proportions of interest in the social sciences are to be found in cultural periodicals with leftist and liberal inclinations, as well as those interested in Western thought. We documented lower proportions in periodicals of a predominantly literary nature, as was the case with those published by government institutions such as the Ministry of Culture.

**Presence of Social Sciences in 5 Cultural Magazines by Number of Pages, 2010 - 2014\***

Figure 35

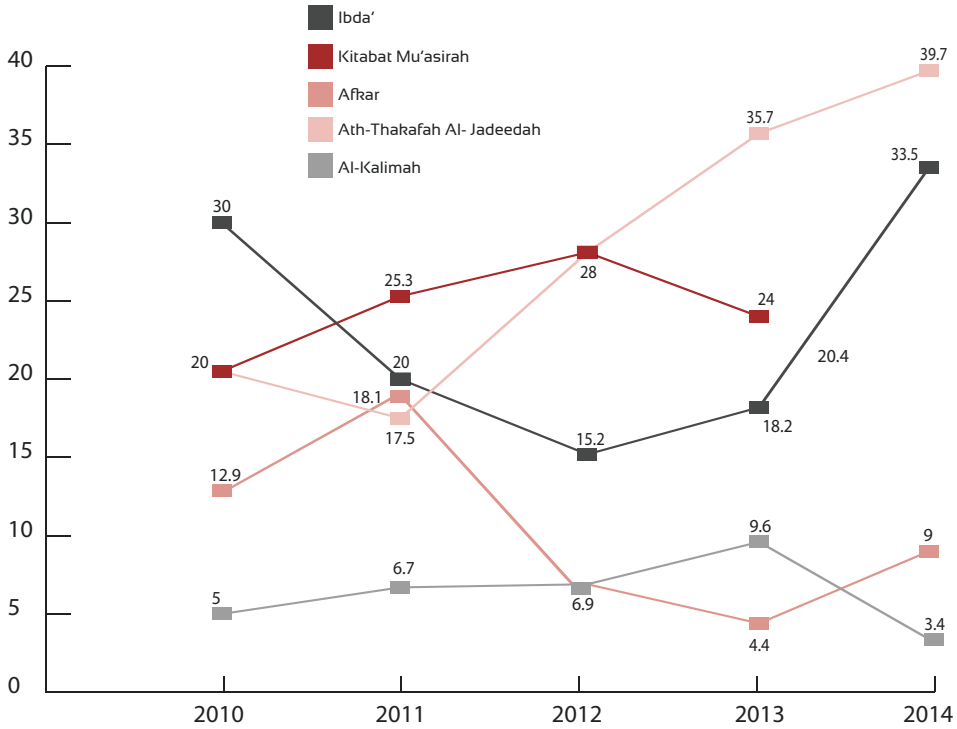


**Source:** Hajjaj, Ali. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arab Cultural Magazines". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
 \* Based on the average number of pages per issue in one year.



Presence of Social Sciences in 5 Cultural Magazines by Year, 2010 - 2014\*

Figure 36



Source: Hajjaj, Ali. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arab Cultural Magazines". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

\* Based on the average number of pages per issue in one year.

We may also observe that the Arab Spring did not actually lead to a clear increase in the cultural presence of the social sciences, even though one might assume that a popular uprising, whatever be the time or clime, would usually lead to an increased interest in the study of social phenomena, particularly those not known previously. This may only be a matter of time, as social research, not only in matters of culture but concerning any social phenomenon, usually waits for phenomena to take their full course before attempting to determine their nature. This approach is

typically connected with the belief that reliable data can only emerge fully at the final stage of a phenomenon's course, not at its beginning or middle where surprises and unforeseeable developments of an as yet indeterminate character still lie ahead. Serious studies of Iranian Revolution, for example, did not begin appearing until a full decade after the phenomenon in question had transpired. Likewise, we saw no in-depth studies of the dynamics of the American Civil Rights Movement until two full decades after its emergence, despite the strength of

social sciences in the United States. On the other hand, we shall subsequently see that revolutions had a clear effect on changing the relative presence of different topics in cultural periodicals, including “revolution” itself as a topic, even if these contributions were not based on field studies and have yet to actually lead to increased interest in the role played by the social sciences in producing cultural knowledge. It is worth mentioning that Arab intellectuals are interested in the issue of revolution in general, but only through epistemic frameworks and approaches they had known in pre-revolutionary times, rather than through new knowledge or approaches that they have become familiar with in the course of the up-risings themselves.

### Social Science Topics in Cultural Periodicals

Generally speaking, cultural periodicals are cross-disciplinary in nature, and one may say the same of the social science present in them. Usually the articles focus on a research topic in its various contexts, not the application of one of the disciplines’ theories and methodologies to the topic as would be expected in academic periodicals. Therefore there are no clear inferences from categorizing social sciences by their usual disciplines in this case, though there are meaningful inferences if we categorize them according to article topic as the following table makes clear:

Table 11

## Social Science Article Topics in Cultural Magazines by Quantitative Presence

General Topic	Number of Magazines in Which Topic Is Present	Presence Ranking*	% Distribution of Articles	% Distribution of Pages
Liberalism	5	Universal	18	17
Revolution	5	Universal	12	9
Modernity	5	Universal	10	13
Culture, Intellectualism	5	Widespread	8	8
Knowledge	4	Widespread	6	7
Islamic, Religious Studies	4	Widespread	4	6
Women's Issues	4	Widespread	5	4
Communication	4	Widespread	4	4
Globalization	4	Widespread	2	3
Orientalism, Civilization	3	Prevailing	5	4
Islamists	3	Prevailing	4	3
Israel	3	Prevailing	3	3
Authority	2	Noticeable	4	4
Economics	2	Noticeable	3	4
Social Issues	2	Noticeable	2	2
Identity, Nationalism	2	Noticeable	2	1
The Left	1	Rare	4	5
Colonialism	1	Rare	1	2
Knowledge Society	1	Rare	2	1
Social Responsibility	1	Rare	1	1

**Source:** Hajjaj, Ali. 2015. “Presence of Social Sciences in Arab Cultural Magazines”. (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

\* Universal: Present in all magazines (100%), General: Present in 80% of magazines, Prevalent: Present in 60% of magazines; Significant: Present in 40% of magazines, Rare: Present in 20% of magazines.

The table shows the degree of presence of different topics in descending order, arranged according to three measures: 1) The ratio of the number of articles on the topic to the total number of social science articles in cultural periodicals. 2) The ratio of the number of pages on the topic to the total number of pages of these articles. 3) The ratio of the number of periodicals in which the topic was present to the total number of sampled periodicals. Each of these measures gives a preliminary idea as to the nature of the topic's presence. If we noticed, for example, that the total proportion of pages dedicated to any particular topic exceeds that of the total articles devoted to it, we may deduce that the topic is being presented in a more thorough way. This thoroughness in turn suggests that the topic may be treated in greater depth than usual. The opposite is also true: if we observe that the proportion of pages dedicated to a defined topic is lower than that of the articles devoted to it, it would be safe to assume that the topic is not being treated thoroughly enough, or that the treatment is of a shallow nature.

These postulates seem correlated to a degree with the longevity of the topic in question. Topics such as "modernity" or "Islamic studies", whose tenure in culture debates has been particularly long, are subjects of longer articles than topics such as "revolution", which are relatively new (revolution is an old topic to be sure, but it vanished before reemerging anew during the Arab Spring.) A

number of contributions on the topic of "revolution" appeared during the period surveyed. They were however relatively brief, and were less in the manner of thorough studies than of commentaries, speculations and preliminary observations. In some periodicals the presence of the topic of "revolution" was clearly connected to local political circumstances. In the Egyptian periodical "Ibdā" for instance, we find no palpable presence of the concept of revolution earlier than 2011, when the periodical began to show some interest in it, before the topic vanished completely from its pages in 2014. In "Afkār", published by the Jordanian Ministry of Culture, we find less extensive discussion of revolutions, whose treatment occupies no more than 4% of the total pages of the periodical displaying social sciences content, even though the proportion of articles dedicated to that topic (11%) approaches the general average for all cultural periodicals during the period surveyed.

Nevertheless, the topic of revolution, particularly as concerns the problems of the Arab Spring, retains a powerful presence in the general aggregate of publications. No topic takes priority over it except those closely connected to it in one way or another, although somewhat older than it, notably the category we classified above as "emancipatory concepts". We include in this category a number of organically interconnected concepts usually discussed in a context that leads them to converge

to one and the same end. Among these are "freedom" and "democracy" along with such issues pertaining to them as "pluralism", "tolerance", "transparency", "human rights", "freedom of innovation", "justice", and "utopian ideals". There is a clear relationship between all these concepts and that of "authority". The latter is also present as an independent issue in a proportion no greater than 4% of the articles and pages sampled. Actual discussions of "authority", however, exceed this percentage, for we here restrict ourselves to articles discussing the nature of authority. Articles that discussed the concept of authority in a way that was critical and in the service of an emancipatory project were classified as part of an overall cluster of emancipatory concepts.

The same approach applies to the topic of "cultural life", which is one of four major topics present in all periodicals. The proportion both of pages and of articles dedicated to it is 8%, this being the percentage that discusses the nature of "culture" at a fundamental level, although there are more contributions touching on the topic in more generic ways. These, however, either elaborate on the relationship between culture and authority in a way that makes the article appear more of a study of "authority" than of culture, or they foreground the relationship between culture and "emancipation" in such a way that they primarily serve as studies of emancipation.

In general, we find an ensemble of interconnected concepts among those that are densely present in cultural periodicals, all pertaining to the problems of change. They include "emancipation", "revolution" and "modernity". We also notice a tangible interest in some other issues relevant in one way or another to the notion of modernity, such as the role of women and communication, as well as some relatively extensive discussions of a cluster designated above as "concepts of knowledge", including such terms as "ideology", "deconstruction", "rationalism", "the subconscious", and "phenomenology". We were surprised, however, by the relative dearth of issues that have been of extreme importance in modern Arab history, the most prominent being those of "colonialism", "nationalism", and "Israel". We must point out here that the highest level of interest in the Palestinian issue was generally found in "Al-Kalima", the only periodical in our sample published outside the Arab world. This may not actually reflect a lack of interest in Palestine or national causes among Arab intellectuals so much as indicate the profound interest they take in more all-encompassing issues of emancipation, especially in their own sociopolitical environs. We also notice that contemporary Islamist movements (including the lines of thought which motivate such movements) do not draw a level of intellectual interest proportional to their role at the time of our survey. Indeed, much of what was written

about them in cultural outlets during the period, particularly in Egypt, begins and ends with preconceived criticisms in the manner of political quarrel, and in a manner that does not present new knowledge so much as reproduce previously known positions.

However, despite clear general interest in the issues of freedom and modernity, the dearth of cultural interest in contemporary problems that have specific participatory implications is quite conspicuous. The best evidence of this is that we rarely find articles on topics such as "social responsibility" and "the knowledge society". There is likewise little intellectual interest in defining, explaining, or critiquing the normal rhetoric that surrounds most such contemporary social problems as "violence", "prostitution", or other issues.

In addition to topics characterized by wide presence and intense treatment such as modernity, liberty, revolution and culture, we observe another stratum of subjects frequently present but not dealt with in great intensity, the most prominent being "globalization", which is to be found in most magazines but only in sparse proportions. This kind of treatment may be inherent to relatively new topics, particularly those not exclusively affecting the Arab world, or whose study is not yet surrounded by globally accepted approaches. The opposite can also be found, namely in the form of subjects that

may seem rarely present but which are intensely dealt with where they do appear. One such topic is "the Left" which is discussed in cultural periodicals almost twice as much as "globalization", although it only appears in 20% of the periodicals, whereas globalization is present in 80% of the magazines despite the paucity of space dedicated to it. What this state of affairs tells us is that some topics may not penetrate the cultural and intellectual domains very widely, but instead come into view through platforms dedicated to these topics. This provides them with an epistemic depth over the course of time and therefore a level of viability that may not be available to topics that are at certain stages more widely circulated, but deprived of a dedicated platform. This may cause them to persist without accumulating epistemic momentum, leading eventually to their death and substitution by other topics, as is the case with any topic that does not have the epistemic provisions needed to ensure its viability and continuity in the intellectual sphere.

## Cultural Capital and Social Sciences: The Model of "Al-Ādāb"

Although we did not include "Al-Ādāb" [Literatures], an old periodical which recently ceased publication, in our sample of cultural periodicals, we did accord it an exploratory study, prepared for this report, about social sciences in cyberspace. That was

because the reason why it ceased print publication after 60 years was associated with a project to resume its publication in purely electronic form. This affords us insight into the characteristics distinguishing those outlets newly created to inhabit cyberspace from older ones presently in the process of being transformed into digital outlets.

Although the periodical's e-publishing project was not completed before the time of this report's completion, we saw it fit to present some additional observations that may serve to clarify the relationship between cultural capital accumulated over a long publication period in recent Arab history, and the employment of the social sciences in the cultural domain. In this case, Al-Ādāb's editor Samah Idriss explained in an interview some of the incentives that can be generalized to all domains. One of them was that restricting publication to the electronic medium saves the periodical from having to rely on large sources of funding that may threaten its independence. The editor also mentioned some of the dynamics of the Arab Spring as culprits: the periodical lost the Syrian market that contained the largest number of its readers, due to the periodical's own independent decision to ensure that its contributors remained free to express their opinions.

We observe in this case a disposition to preserve a cultural capital sixty years in the making. It is

what motivated Al-Ādāb to leave the print domain in a final attempt to preserve what remained of its rich heritage as one of the most important cultural periodicals in modern Arab history. Despite what the name might appear to indicate regarding its content, Al-Ādāb has been committed from the very beginning to the presentation of political and social issues side by side with literature. This was due to a particular perspective that regarded as organic the relationship between literary and cultural innovation on the one hand, and major social and political affairs on the other. An opposition to knowledge that was uncommitted to any particular position accompanied this perspective. Its editor-in-chief therefore did not see it as an academic publication but rather preferred the appellation of "committed publication". It seems that the difference between the two categories has little to do with elitism so much as a belief in the importance of taking a stand. The editor-in-chief is of the view that there is no such thing as a text without a position, this being a view that academic publications do not as a rule encourage. He added that he did not have much stock in the concept of peer-review, since many periodicals claim to be peer-reviewed only as a form of duplicity.

This stance is actually consistent with widespread and undeniable tendencies in cultural as well academic domains. Such tendencies

give priority, or at least high importance, to commitment to a principle. We find in "Al-Ādāb" a textbook example of this point of view, which has followed the journal since its launch with the outbreak of the 1952 Egyptian Free Officers Movement. Since then, the periodical has seen itself as a part of a progressive, emancipatory, comprehensive Arab project. In a survey of 124 pieces published during the final five years of the print existence of the journal (2008-2012), which has today been transformed into a digital archive, we found that the presence of social sciences took up a great amount of space alongside literary issues, fiction and poetry. This mixed presence of genres was based on the belief that it was impossible to treat any issue in a manner decontextualized from other phenomena. For example, "Al-Ādāb" treated political reform in connection with religious reform, and religious reform in connection with educational reform and women's liberation, which in turn could not be treated separately from the liberation of society as a whole. In the materials that took social sciences into consideration, we found an approach to topics that takes the approaches of the social sciences as guidelines and adheres to scientific principles, but is not actually research-based in many cases, even though most of the authors are university professors, social science PhDs, or otherwise experienced researchers and

analysts. Here we can identify an approach to presentation of ideas where positions take precedence or are at the focus, although the positions taken and opinions expressed depend, with some exceptions, on documentation and evidence from sources, and present various opinions before gradually reaching conclusions.

## Social Sciences in Newspapers

We surveyed the presence of social scientific thought in the Arab press using a sample of five newspapers distinguished by their historical roots and the geographic variety of their readers. In order to guarantee the consistency of the sample in this preliminary study, we decided to focus on newspapers that are in wide circulation across the Arab world. We therefore employed a number of standards, one of which was that the proportion of readers in any given country should not exceed 50% of the newspaper's total readership or, in other words, that at least half of the newspaper's readers should be from outside the country of publication, allowing us to safely say that the newspaper is read in more than one Arab country to an acceptable degree. Despite this condition, we added Al-Ahram newspaper (Egypt) to our sample although it does not satisfy this standard, but has a large number of readers in a crucial country with a large population. The other newspapers were: "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat", "Al-Quds", "Al-Hayāt", and "An-Nahār"<sup>(4)</sup>.

[4] As-Safir newspaper was left out of the public sphere as its archives were not accessible at the time of the study.

We confined our survey to the last five years (from the beginning of 2010 to the end of 2014)<sup>(5)</sup>, setting our starting point in the year preceding the Arab Spring to see if this phenomenon had any effect on social science presence and its nature in Arab newspapers. It is possible to say that setting different standards for selecting our sample—such as selecting the most widely read newspaper in each Arab country—may yield different results from the ones we see here, but this cannot be ascertained at this point. It was however clear to us that a different sample composition selection might require its own report. Therefore we preferred in this initial report to allude to the most general features related to social science presence in a sample of newspapers that are widely distributed across the Arab world.

It goes without saying that we should not expect to find scientific thought in its academic form in newspapers. Newspapers, by nature, are mostly directed at the general public, not to a group of specialized researchers. For this reason we adopted classification standards regarding general rather than detailed or specialized social science forms. Based on such principles, we limited our survey to articles that display a serious interest in an in-depth discussion of social phenomena and in presenting social science concepts and experiences to the general public. We have naturally excluded all

news-reporting material, including cultural news and news about academic conferences or meetings. That was because the scientific content of a newspaper is material that goes beyond news reporting: it should at least include analysis of social phenomena or present a concept relevant to the social sciences, for example “autonomy”, “sustainable development”, “inequality”, “civil society” or any number of similar others.

The standards we set for considering newspaper material to be relevant for the social sciences included learned presentation that transcends generalizations about widely referenced topics such as “democracy”, “revolution”, “liberalism”, “the state”, “the clan”, “capitalism”, or “urbanization”, and similar others. We also included materials of an expository nature, such as reviews of social science publications and biographies of social science scholars. “Social science” fields were defined in a way that was consistent with the rest of the report, as containing learned material about political science, anthropology, sociology, economics, history, or psychology, as well as interdisciplinary material that includes any of these social sciences, such as gender studies or urban studies. Based on these standards and definitions we were able to include 1214 articles in this sample of newspapers over the five years covered, as summarized in the following table:

[5] The survey of An-Nahar newspaper was limited to two years (2013-2014) due to logistical reasons.



Table 12

Number of Monitored Articles by Newspaper, 2010 - 2014					
Al-Hayat	Al-Quds	Al-Ahram	Asharq Al-Awsat	An-Nahar*	Total
391	291	285	202	45*	1214

**Source:** Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

\* An-Nahar newspaper was monitored for two years only (2013-2014) for logistical reasons.

In what follows we present the results of this survey from five different aspects. The first looks into the proportions of social science presence in newspapers in general. The second classifies this presence into different types. The third reviews the scientific concepts employed by newspapers and their arrangement by order of the frequency of their presence. The fourth sheds light on the quantity and quality of scholarly books covered or summarized in the newspapers. And finally, the last item in this context presents the personal presence of scholars in newspapers to assess what type of academic approach is capable of communicating in the public sphere. In this last aspect of the study we notice two phenomena of personal presence: scholars present in the form of biographies written about them, and prominent writers of learned material in the Arab press. Generally speaking, we notice the presence of social sciences in Arab newspapers to be numerically weak, though it does have qualitative significance. The contributions tend to focus on issues of social change, despite absence of detailed discus-

sions. Finally, we notice a distinguished presence in the Arab press of a number of scholars who have developed an ability to communicate with the wider public over the years.

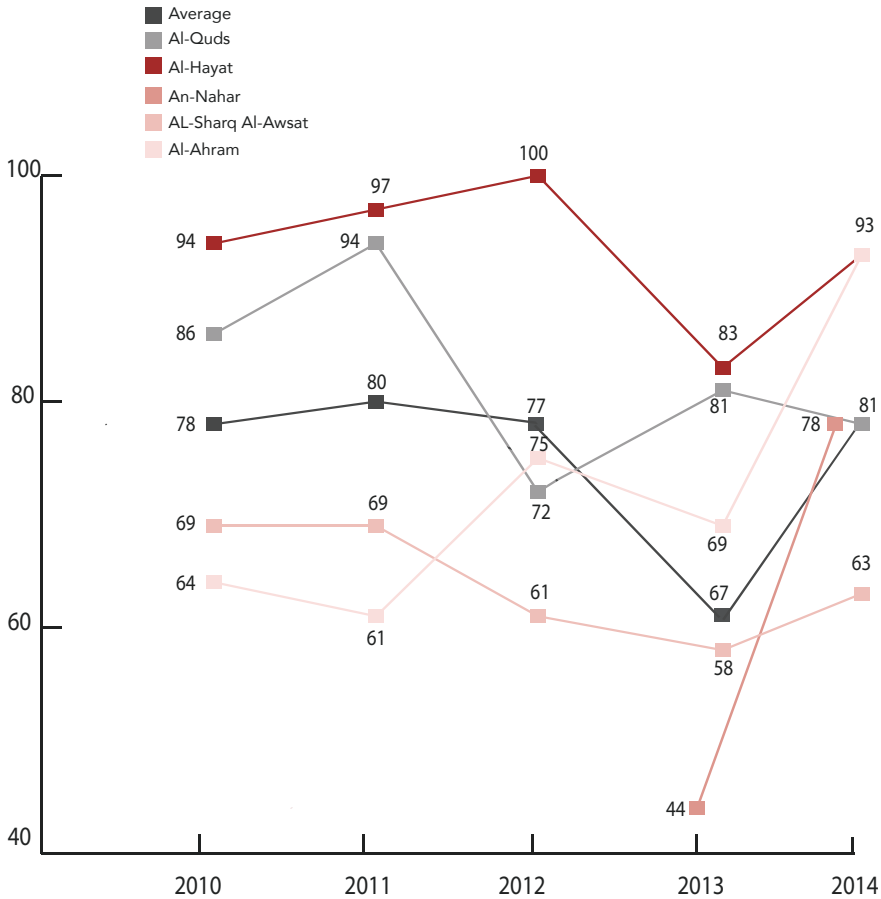
### The Proportion of Learned Presence in Newspapers

Figure 37 conveys a preliminary glimpse into the presence of scientific thought in the press, showing the proportion of issues that contain learned materials (at least one article with learned content) out of the total number of each newspaper's issues per year. We see here that 77% is the general average over all years and for all newspapers, but as one would expect, there are differences when we look at each newspaper separately. For instance, Al-Hayat newspaper seems to be in the lead with topics that include social sciences being present in almost 90% of the total issues over the five years. In one year, 2012, all of this newspaper's issues contained at least one article with learned content. It is followed by Al-Quds newspaper, which has annual averages indicating

continuity in the newspaper's social science interest. We can, however, contrast this relatively high interest with a relative and continuous lack of interest in Ash-Sharq Al-Awsat. Elsewhere, we detect a more inconsistent pattern in newspapers that have a long history but live amidst volatile political conditions that may affect their direction. We may find it strange, for instance, that the year in

which Al-Ahram newspaper showed the least interest in social scientific thought was 2011 (during the year of the revolution in Egypt) with social science being present in only 61% of its issues then. It is possible that subsequent changes in the newspaper's administration led to it later increasing its interest in publishing learned material, leading to a proportion of 93% of the issues in 2014.

### Proportion of Issues Containing Social Sciences in 5 Arabic Newspapers, 2010 - 2014



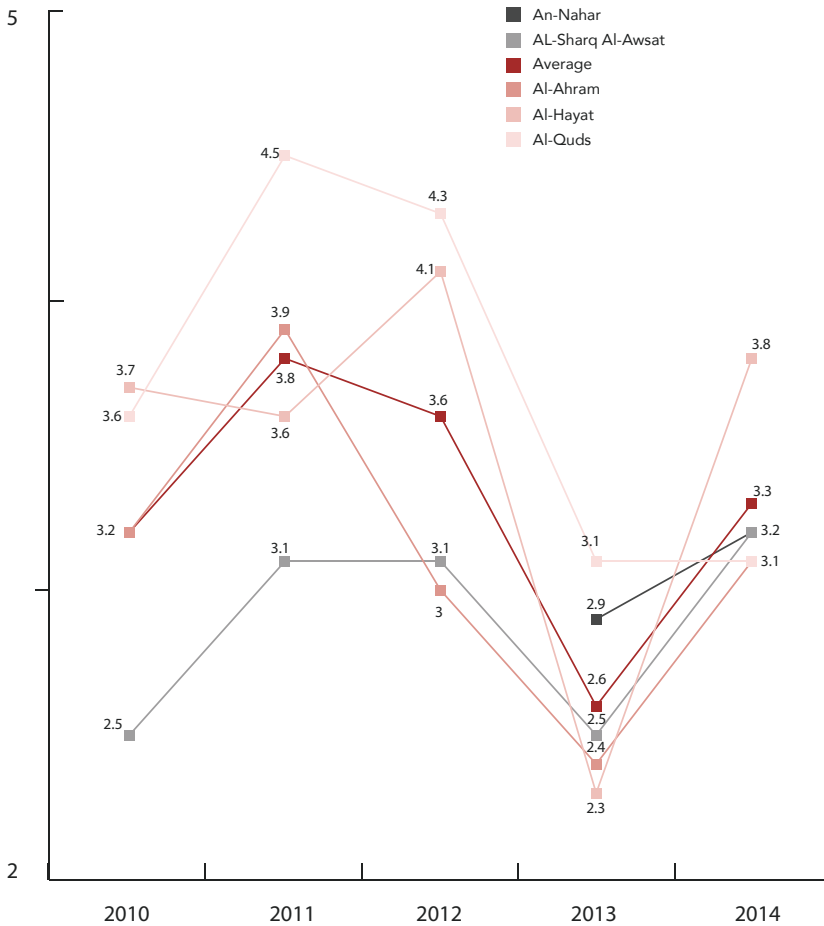
Source: Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

If we take a deeper look into the newspapers' issues that include social science (according to the criteria mentioned above and in the appendix), we find the proportion of such learned material to range from 2.3% to 4.5% (averaging 3.3%) of the newspapers' total space. Such small proportions may appear inherent to the nature of the printed press. We

do however have to ask ourselves whether it is possible for a newspaper to hold more learned information, say 10% of its size, without jeopardizing its basic nature as a daily news outlet. In any case, the results do seem consistent across newspapers, although Al-Quds is clearly in the forefront in terms of relative page space dedicated to social science material.

**Space occupied by academic material relative to newspaper size in 5 Arabic newspapers, 2010 - 2014**

Figure 38



Source: Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

Once we begin to delve deeper into these numerical results in order to understand something about the content, we find that classifying learned articles by size gives us an elementary indicator of how much significance is given to the presentation of social science material or concepts (and not necessarily to the quality thereof).

This standard leads to the conclusion that the prominent form of learned composition in newspapers is a large or medium sized article, and rarely is it presented through small articles. However, proportions vary between newspapers in a manner that might indicate the extent of interest in the social sciences.

**Number of Social Science Articles by Size in 5 Arabic Newspapers, 2014 -2010\***

Figure 39

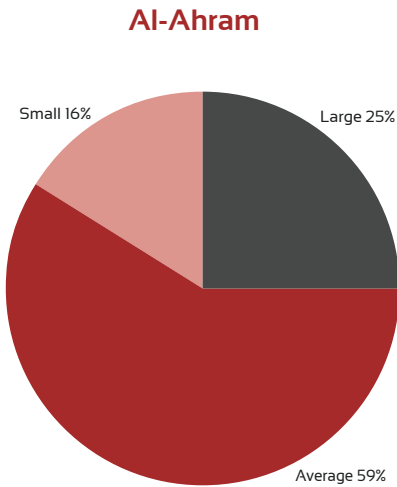


Figure 40

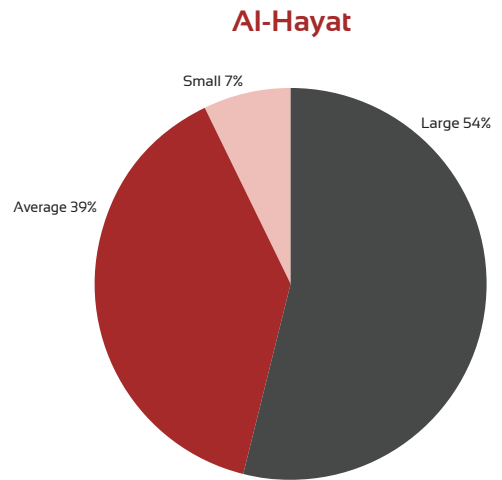


Figure 41

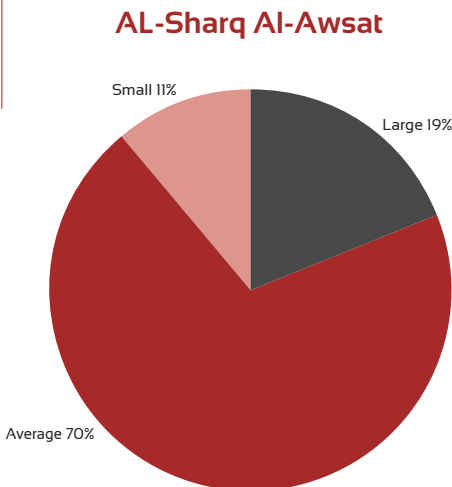
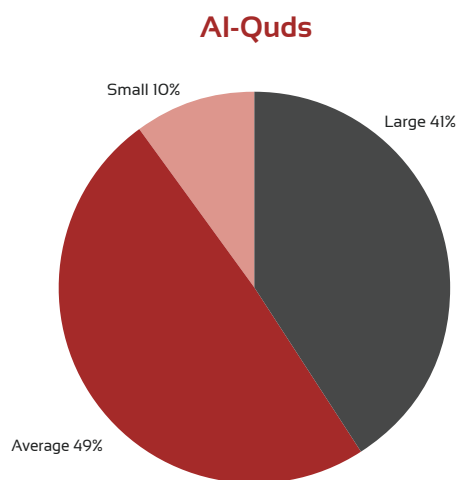


Figure 42



## An-Nahar

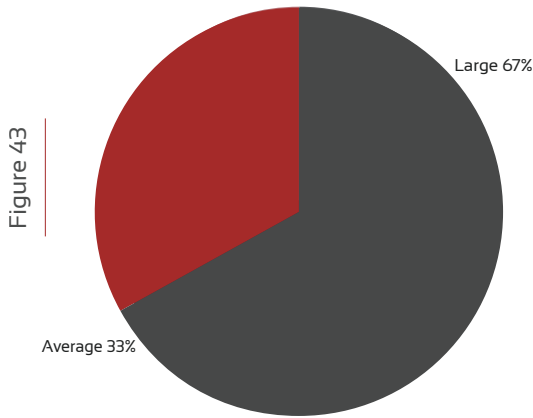


Figure 43

## Average

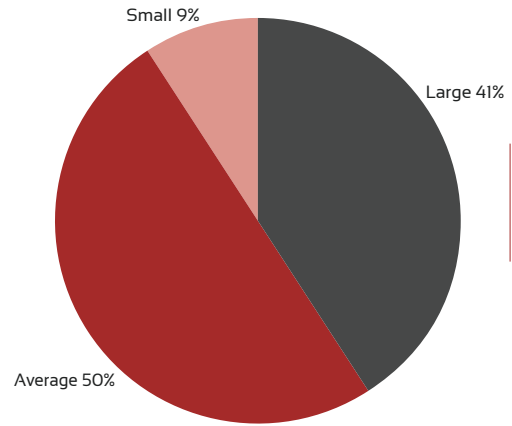


Figure 44

**Source:** Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)  
 \* Small: 500 words, Medium: 1000 words, Large: 1500 words

The medium-sized compositions may be suitable in many cases due to their presumed ability to draw readers, as long as they also satisfy the requirements of learned presentation. As we will later come to appreciate, presentation size is an indicator of another phenomenon: the presence of senior authors who usually handle the larger sized articles.

### Classification of Presence

The team classified the appearance of social sciences in the press according to two principles: first, the type of treatment, divided into five categories. Second, the academic classification of the treatment, divided into nine categories. The types of treatment included: 1) Scientific analysis (the dissection

of a social, political, or any other relevant problem through inferences and approaches borrowed from the social sciences); 2) Presentation of a social science concept; 3) Book review; 4) Biographical sketch; and 5) A report about a conference. The scientific classification treats the division of material by social science disciplines in their current form: economics, politics, sociology and anthropology<sup>(6)</sup>, psychology, political history, social history, religious history, women's studies, and urban studies.

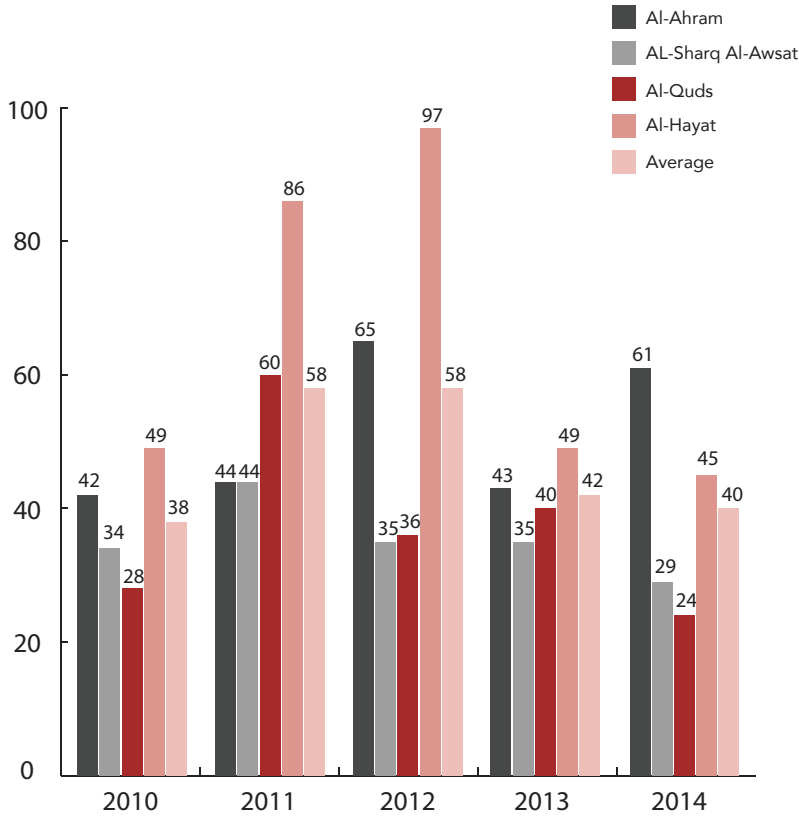
It was clear that scientific analysis is by far the favored format to address the social sciences in newspapers, followed in much lesser degrees by book reviews and concept presentations, both of which were relatively rare<sup>(7)</sup>.

(6) Due to the natural intertwining between anthropology and sociology in the press, they were combined into one category as no meaningful separation between them was possible.

(7) An-Nahar newspaper was excluded from this comparison as it was not possible to obtain rates which can be compared over a five years period.

## Number of Articles Containing Scientific Analysis in 4 Arabic Newspapers, 2010 - 2014

Figure 45



Source: Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

In some years the other types of social science treatment (such as biographies and conference reports) disappear in newspapers altogether despite the fact that they are clearly related to the informative mission of newspapers. Here emerges an unexpected phenomenon: social sciences in newspapers are indeed presented in an academic, albeit simplified, form despite the presence of other forms of presentation that

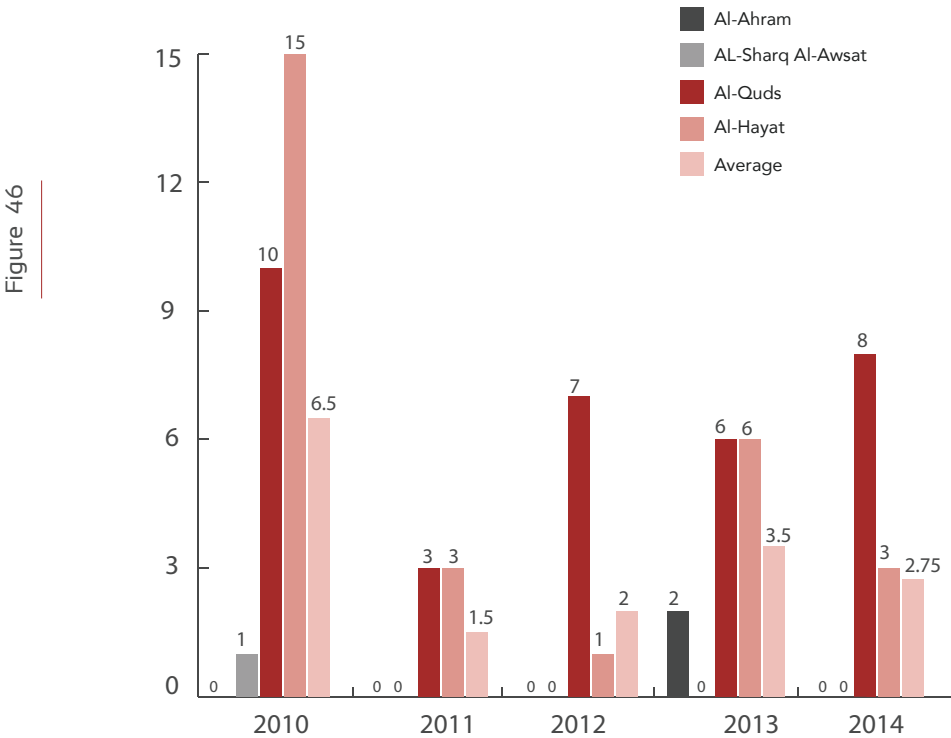
align more easily with the nature of journalism. This may be due to newspapers usually delegating social science scholars to write about these topics rather than their own reporters or freelance writers. This imbues the articles with an academic character that social science scholars are used to or prefer.

Figure 45 shows some phenomena that cannot be understood without

understanding the background behind them: for instance in Al-Ahram there is a significant increase in social science presence in 2012, followed by a large decline in 2013. This may have more to do with laying off a large number of writers within this period rather than any strategic decision in this direction, as is evidenced by the clear increase in social science presence in 2014. Generally speaking, learned analysis reached its peak

in the first two years of the Arab Spring (2011-2012) before receding thereafter. These results lead us to postulate that the presence of social science in the public sphere is often related to other social phenomena, such as a dynamic condition of a popular upheaval, which may have a causal relationship to or at least be correlated with a general epistemic transformation affecting society as a whole, including its academic fields.

## Number of Articles Containing Concept Review in 4 Arabic Newspapers, 2010 - 2014



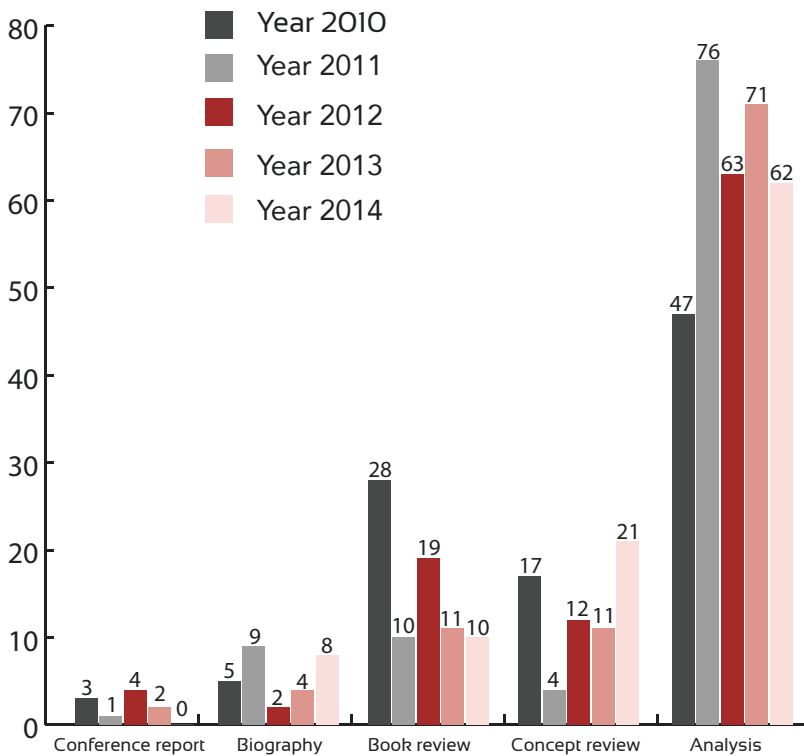
Source: Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

Apart from scientific analyses, other forms of social science treatment decline greatly as indicated in Figure 46 on concept presentations. This despite the fact that the explanation of concepts is crucial not only for a learned understanding of reality, but moreover for establishing common reference points for dialogues, and especially during a stage witnessing actual or potential transformations in social, political and epistemic realities. Although, as we shall

see later, there are a great number of concepts relating to the social sciences handled by the press, Arab newspapers make little to no effort to present the content and definitions of these concepts. There are, however, some significant exceptions, as is the case with Al-Quds newspaper, the only newspaper in our sample that showed inclusiveness in its handling of the different styles of presenting social sciences, closely followed by Al-Hayat. Classifying social sciences in

**Al-Quds Newspaper as a Model for the Presence of all Types of Articles in Newspapers: Number of Articles**

Figure 47



**Source:** Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)



newspapers by their usual disciplines shows that some disciplines prevail while others are nearly absent. In this context, we notice the weak presence of economics as a science (although not as news), with the exception of Al-Ahram. Political science is clearly present in all newspapers for obvious reasons directly related to the general topics handled by the press, although we do know that the presence of any social science in a newspaper is an editorial choice rather than an inevitability. An-Nahar, for instance, does not contain a strong political science presence, although it does contain a much more powerful sociology and

anthropology presence, in addition to a distinguished presence for psychology, which is almost absent from other newspapers. Ahmad Musa Badawi (Badawi, 2015) postulates that this phenomenon may be connected to the fragile political balance in Lebanon, the newspaper's country of issue and home to its largest audience, a condition that encourages the newspaper to avoid sensitive political topics and put forward other research topics that could serve as uniting factors in a divided society. (We should remind our readers here that social science postulates are explanatory proposals awaiting evidence, not incontrovertible facts).

## Presence of Social Science Articles in 5 Arabic Newspapers, 2010-2014

- Economics
- Political Sciences
- Sociology & Anthropology
- History
- Other social sciences
- Psychology

**Al-Ahram**

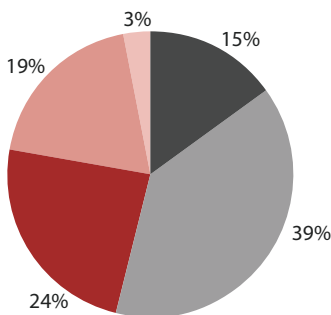


Figure 48

- Economics
- Political Sciences
- Sociology & Anthropology
- History
- Other social sciences
- Psychology

**AL-Sharq Al-Awsat**

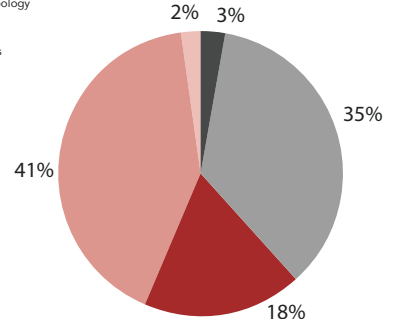


Figure 49

- Economics
- Political Sciences
- Sociology & Anthropology
- History
- Other social sciences
- Psychology

**Al-Quds**

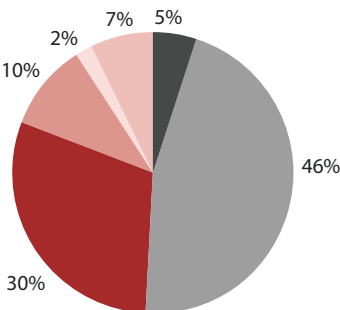


Figure 50

- Economics
- Political Sciences
- Sociology & Anthropology
- History
- Other social sciences
- Psychology

**Al-Hayat**

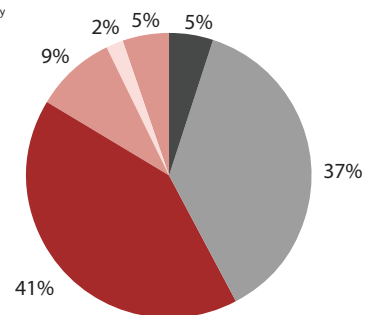


Figure 51

■ Economics  
 ■ Political Sciences  
 ■ Sociology & Anthropology  
 ■ History  
 ■ Other social sciences  
 ■ Psychology

An-Nahar

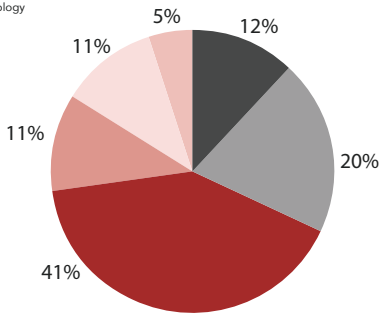


Figure 52

■ Economics  
 ■ Political Sciences  
 ■ Sociology & Anthropology  
 ■ History  
 ■ Other social sciences  
 ■ Psychology

Average

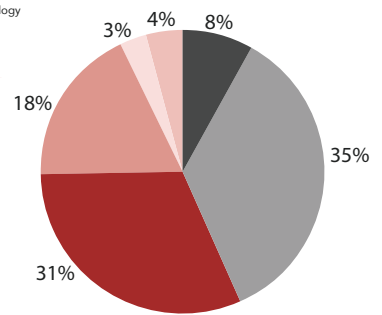


Figure 53

Source: Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

Presence of History Types in 5 Arabic Newspapers, 2010- 2014

	Political History	Social History	Religious History	Total
Percentage of history topics in Al-Ahram	74	32	4	100
Percentage of history as a whole among social sciences in Al-Ahram	19			
Percentage of history topics in Asharq Al-Awsat	71	25	4	100
Percentage of history as a whole among social sciences in Asharq Al-Awsat	41			
Percentage of history topics in Al-Quds	61	5	34	100
Percentage of history as a whole among social sciences in Al-Quds	10			
Percentage of history topics in Al-Hayat	38	33	29	100
Percentage of history as a whole among social sciences in Al-Hayat	9			
Percentage of history topics in Annahar	43	14	43	100
Percentage of history as a whole among social sciences in Annahar	11			
Percentage of history topics in all newspapers	63	52	12	100
Percentage of history as a whole among social sciences in all newspapers	18			

Table 13

Source: Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

We notice the sustained presence of historical topics in some outlets, such as Ash-Sharq Al-Awsat, which represent the largest share of topics in the social sciences. Of the different types of history, we see that political history is at the forefront in all newspapers, followed by social history and finally religious history. The weak presence of religious history at times distinguished by the strong presence of large Islamic social movements may seem strange, but it may indicate that these movements were understood (or even defined themselves) as essentially political movements despite being based on religious discourse. It may also evidence the fact that religion is not treated as a historical issue, but rather as an issue of current affairs, meaning that religious history is often asked to fulfill an exhortative role rather than assume a scientific form.

## Topics Subject to Learned Treatment in Newspapers

We move here to the content of learned thought as it appears through the utilized concepts in newspapers. It should be evident that most topics subject to learned analysis in newspapers would also be topics present in daily news. But their learned presence or lack thereof in newspapers gives us an indication as to whether or not there is a relationship between daily events and scientific thought.

Table 14 presents the extent of interest in Arab newspapers in

general in subjecting the different topics that appear between the years 2010-2014 to learned treatment. The table is arranged in descending order, beginning with the issues most subject to learned analysis down to the least. Each row in the table includes the main concept along with a cluster of concepts connected to it, as classified by our working team.

Table 14 is a direct reflection of the state of the press during 2010-2014 in terms of the learned treatment of various topics. The event most prominent in the media in general during that period was without doubt the Arab Spring, and it came in the lead of the issues studied by newspapers. It is followed by the issue of political Islam, which relates to the Arab Spring in one way or another despite being older. Other topics closely related to these first two follow, such as democracy, which comes in third, and societal participation, which comes fifth. All of the topics occupying the top positions in the above table are distinguished first and foremost by their close connection with the problem of change, but in a general way. It is also clear here that we face societies aspiring to total and comprehensive change, but with different visions about the nature of these heralded changes and its priorities. For instance, issues that provide a more exact dimension regarding the problems and courses of action relating to the issue change, such as youth (12th position), education (18th position), development (20th issue), and even

## Issues Discussed in 5 Arabic Newspapers, 2010 - 2014

Level of Interest	General Issue	Concept Groups Related to the General Issue
1	Arab Spring	Revolution, The Arab Spring, Arab Uprisings
2	Political Islam	Political Islam, Islamic Fundamentalism, Salafism, Islamic Brotherhood, Islamic Groups, Religious Establishment
3	Democracy	Democracy, Democratic Transformation, Elections
4	Women's Issues	Women's Rights, Women's Representation, Women's Empowerment
5	Societal Participation	Civil State, Civil Society, Societal Participation
6	Terrorism	Terrorism, Terrorist Organizations, Islamophobia
7	Sectarianism	Sectarianism, Minority Issues, Sectarian Crisis
8	Authoritarianism	Authoritarianism, Tyranny, Dictatorship, Military Rule, Political Fascism
9	Urbanization	Civilization, Urban Development, Urbanization, Modernization, Planning, Welfare
10	The Nation	Arab Nationalism, Religious Identity, Racial Identity
11	Social Equality	Human Rights, Equality, Social Equality, Social Enslavement
12	Youth	Youth Rights, Youth Participation, Youth Empowerment
13	Major Political Networks	World Order, Regional Order, Arab Order
14	Economy	Capitalism, Market Economics, World Economy, Economic Crisis
15	Enlightenment	Arab Renaissance, Enlightenment, Arab Intellectualism
16	Corruption	Political Corruption, Economic Corruption, Administrative Corruption, Fighting Corruption
17	Psychology	Psychological studies, Psychological Disorders, Mental Health
18	Education	Education, Right to Education, Education Development, Free Education
19	Palestine	Zionism, Occupation, the Palestinian Issue, Settlement, Colonialism
20	Development	Development, Sustained Development, Local Development, Economic Development
21	Civilization	Civilization, Clash of Civilizations, Civilizations Dialogue
22	Globalization	Globalization, Cultural Globalization, Economic Globalization
23	Liberalism	Liberalism, Neoliberalism
24	Family	Family, Childhood, Child Labor, Homelessness, Juvenile Delinquency

Table 14

**Source:** Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

social justice (11th position) are not within the top ten subjects that have the greatest learned presence in newspapers.

Nevertheless, the Arab Spring is strongly present in the background of many of the issues in this table, including the abovementioned topics directly related to the problem of change (youth, social justice, education, and development). It is also present in many other issues, especially authoritarianism (8th position) and corruption (16th position). Among notable phenomena is the powerful presence of women's issues in ways that link them to rights and participation (4th position), now totally separate from family issues (which used to be the traditional background for discussing women's roles, but which now retreats to the bottom of our table). This does not necessarily mean the liberation of the concept "woman" from that of "family", but more likely that the family as such does not appear to pose a major social problem and therefore requires no extensive discussion. The irony of the situation is that the private sphere, represented here in the family, is not scrutinized by the public sphere, even if for the sake of understanding its nature.

We also notice the continuing presence of the issue of collective or national identity among the top ten most studied topics by newspapers. Yet also noticeable is the relatively weak presence of another concept historically linked to it in the Arab

World, namely the Palestinian cause. Palestine occupies a late position in our list today (19th, and would even be later if we exclude Al-Quds newspaper). We may suggest two possible reasons for this: the first is the particularity of the period of our survey (2010-2014), which witnessed other priorities that stole urgency, notably the Arab Spring and all issues related to it, such as democracy, social participation, justice, corruption, and others issues directly related to the call for comprehensive social change. The second possibility, which may be more decisive, is the presumption that the Palestinian cause is self-evident. Scientific analysis usually handles issues that need explanation or clarification, and tends to stay away from those that seem to be clearly understood—unless of course the scholar writing sees that the apparently obvious issue may entail hidden aspects that need excavation and presentation. However, we find nothing in the historical discussion of Palestine in the Arab world to indicate that this issue has lost its clarity, which means that Palestine mainly appears in newspapers in the form of news events rather than as social science. In any case, the clarity of any issue does not necessarily mean it cannot benefit from scholarly analysis; the clarity of the Palestinian cause does not necessarily mean that the social sciences should be absent from it, or that there is no reason for intensifying the application of social science to it. Political science and history play a natural role in this affair, and even

social sciences that may not seem too relevant to this issue at the surface, such as psychology, may play a role in addressing the psychological traumas resulting from the occupation. As such we can always derive a role for any social science, even if the subject of analysis seems clear.

Finally, there is an evidently weak presence of issues with a global yet ambiguous character. Such issues include civilization (21st position) and globalization (22nd position, and this late position is notable for a topic so continuously present in all the other frameworks of the public sphere as well as scholarly periodicals, indicating that this topic enjoys an interest that has the character of great breadth and little depth). Each of these two topics has its own long journey and there is little space here for discussing them in detail, but the lack of interest in the issue of globalization may seem strange, especially with its great impact on contemporary history. Perhaps one of the causes of this lack of interest is the prevailing feeling that the Arab world did not play a very effective role in giving rise to contemporary globalization, although it is exposed to it. There are also other potential reasons, the most important of which may be the lack of common clarity on how to study this phenomenon, even in the West. Studies focusing on the topic are still scattered or confined each to a certain school, approach, and discipline. There are of course exceptions to this, but they remain difficult to summarize usefully. As for the retreat

in interest in the topic of civilization, which was particularly connected to discussions of globalization in the 1990s, the reason perhaps is that it does not seem particularly beneficial today due to the emergence of global social networking, in addition to the rise of other terms of discussion. These include Islam and the issues of national identity and heritage, which seem more capable of fleshing out the sought-after content behind the concept of civilization.

### The Presence of Books

It is safe to say that newspaper exposition of social science books provides the closest channel of communication between the newspaper's readers and the products of these sciences. Such books usually find their way into the cultural pages of newspapers, where they coexist side by side with poems, literary reviews, arts, and other cultural genres, although we may find this material in other parts of the newspaper. Generally speaking, the presence of social science books is not very frequent, and we can even say that there is a decline in book presence during the period of our survey. The newspapers with high indicators of interest in the social sciences (the most important of which are Al-Quds followed by Al-Hayat) were more interested in presenting books. In a sample of 4 newspapers (we excluded An-Nahar here so as to arrive at meaningful averages over the whole period) we found 110 book reviews over five years, which gives us an average of 5-6 book reviews per

newspaper per year. This represents a relatively humble presence even though its significance in terms of knowledge exceeds its size, especially if we view the book as a vessel of a far more dense form of knowledge than a newspaper article equal in size to the book's summary. There is no clear reason for the decline of this type of learned presentation during the survey period, and perhaps it only seems like a decline due to the exceptional rise in book reviews in the first year of the survey. But the decline continues later if not at drastic rates. We notice that the largest decline was in the reviews of

Arabic books, which increasingly seem less important than foreign books in 2011-2012, before recovering some of their importance. If we survey book titles, we find that the newspapers with the greatest interest in books (such as Al-Quds) also feature book reviews with a wider range of social science topics. Most newspapers focus on book reviews that relate to the topics most present in the list above, but in a manner that allows the newspaper to take a step back from daily events in order to explore their broader scientific background and their historical and cultural ramifications.

**Number of Social Science Books Reviewed in 4 Arabic Newspapers by Language, 2010 - 2014**

Figure 54



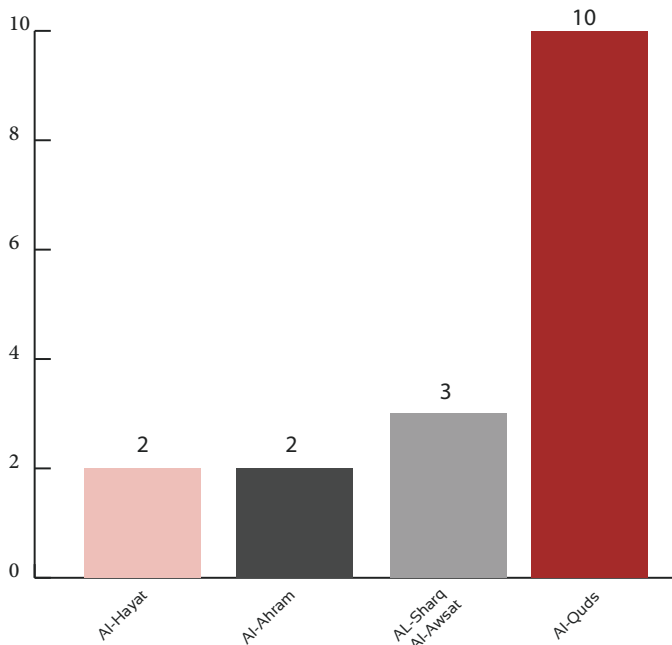
Source: Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

## The Presence of Social Science Scholars: Biographies and Article Writers

Alongside book reviews and learned analyses, two types of personal presence for social science scholars in newspapers emerge: as subjects of biographies and as article authors. The biographies of Arab and foreign social science scholars constitute forms of presence for the social sciences as a whole, even if it is personal presence. A biography may be one means of arriving at knowledge content, or are at least a way signaling the significance of a particular type of thought, encapsulated as the

title of someone's life. We may not have plenty of biographies for social science scholars in the public sphere, especially if their careers do not include prominent responsibilities in political life or government, or if their achievements remain confined to their academic role. But the presence of a social science scholar as a subject of a biography in the public domain should indicate some sort of organic relationship between this scholar and society, and provide us with some basic indicators about the extent of the mutual influence between them. Here we observe a relatively small, yet meaningful, presence for social science scholars in all newspapers.

**Number of Biographies of Social Scientists in 4 Arabic Newspapers, 2010 - 2014**



**Source:** Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

Figure 55



The size of this presence differs between newspapers. It is relatively large in Al-Quds (a newspaper which is deeply interested in social sciences and which provided 10 out of the 17 biographies we found in the sample during the observation period) while being rare if not absent in other newspapers. Most of those biographies relate to scholars who are renowned in general intellectual circles, such as Muhammad Abed Al-Jabiri, Abdel-Wahab El-Messiri, Mohammed Arkoun, Hussein Mroueh, and Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd. There is also some interest in researchers who deserve wider recognition, such as Hussam Tammam and Ahmed Jdey. It is noticeable that most of these scholars are engaged in epistemic projects rotating around issues of heritage and enlightenment. They also tend to work across several fields of knowledge, which gives their contributions a comprehensive character consistent with what we previously noted regarding broad interest in totalistic views at the expense of concepts requiring greater accuracy and attention to detail, such as education or sustainable development. We do not see biographies for social science scholars with precise academic achievements, including applied ones. This, however, should not necessarily seem strange, as totalistic ideas tend to be most consistent with a social condition typified by a continuing, decades-long conflict over issues of strategic orientation, including collective identity, the permissible

role of external factors, and the role of history in making the future.

In this connection we can infer a modest presence for biographies of foreign thinkers who played different roles such as Hannah Arendt, Jean-Louis Fabiani, Eric Hobsbawm, John Locke and Maxime Rodinson. Despite their relatively small number, we notice more variety in their epistemic reference points in comparison with their Arab counterparts. With the possible exception of Rodinson, who among those biographed in newspapers is closest to the interests of the biographed Arab thinkers in issues of heritage, we find the achievements of non-Arab scholars to span establishing the principles of classical liberal thought, developing methods for writing local and global social history, analyzing the bureaucratic character of modernity and the modern state, and engaging in sociology of knowledge. Although these achievements have their own totalistic derivations, they operate in different circles and mostly rely on precise observations of knowledge attendant to contemporary daily dynamics in the society in which the researcher lives.

But the personal presence, which holds a higher quantitative and qualitative importance, is the presence of authors themselves. During the survey period, we located 1214 articles in social sciences written by 680 authors in our sample. As would be expected, the abundance of scientific productivity varied in

## Biographies of Social Science Thinkers in 4 Arabic Newspapers, 2010 - 2014

Table 15

Newspaper	Year	Name of Thinker
Al-Ahram	2013	Muhammad Arkoun
Al-Ahram	2014	Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd
Al-Sharq Al-Awsat	2010	Ghazi Al-Qussaybi
Al-Sharq Al-Awsat	2014	Eric Hobsbawm
Al-Sharq Al-Awsat	2014	John Locke
Al-Quds	2010	Michèle Vianès
Al-Quds	2010	Muhammad Abed Al-Jaberi
Al-Quds	2010	Jean-Louis Fabiani
Al-Quds	2011	Ahmed Jdey
Al-Quds	2011	Muhammad Arkoun
Al-Quds	2011	Abd Al-Wahab Al-Massiri
Al-Quds	2012	Hussein Mroueh
Al-Quds	2013	Abd Al-Kabir Al-Khatibi
Al-Quds	2014	Hannah Arendt
Al-Quds	2014	Muhammad Abed Al-Jaberi
Al-Hayat	2010	Maxime Rodinson
Al-Hayat	2011	Hussam Tammam

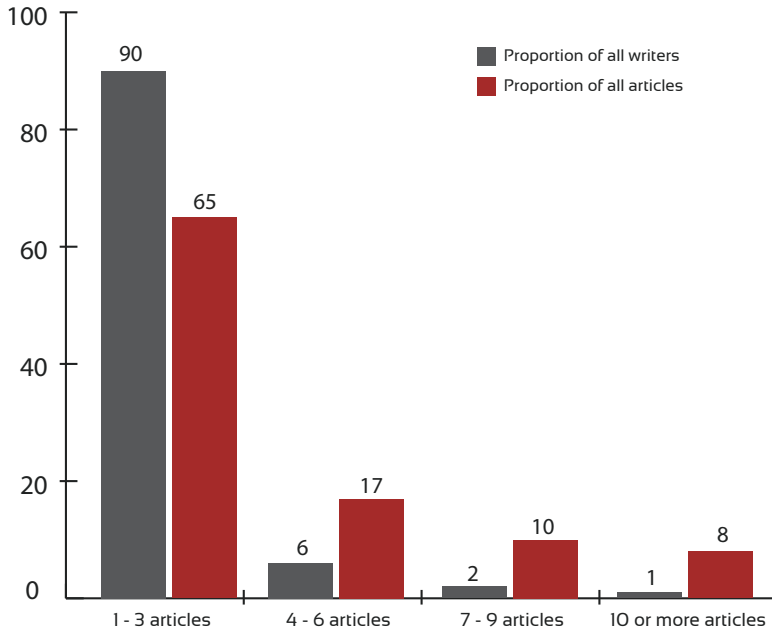
**Source:** Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

newspapers, but 90% of the authors wrote less than 3 articles, while 9% were responsible for 35% of social science presence in newspapers. This phenomenon can be evaluated in different ways. We may adopt it as an indicator of the hegemony of a relatively limited number of

authors over the social sciences in press form. However, hegemony is a relative issue, not an absolute one. Its actual role cannot be assessed without qualitative evaluation based on criteria that would allow us to determine how hegemony impacts any social condition.

**Dominance Level: Proportion of Writers Relative to their Newspaper Productivity**

Figure 56



Source: Badawi, Ahmad Musa, Mahmud Adullah and Hani Suleiman. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arabic Newspapers". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

The fact that 90% of authors account only for 65% of learned material in newspapers is not necessarily inconsistent with the general nature of academic production. It should not be surprising that senior authors with long research résumés enjoy greater presence than junior writers who are still at the beginning of their careers. Nevertheless, there are differences between newspapers in this respect. Only Al-Ahram and Al-Sharq Al-Awsat host authors who wrote more than 10 articles, and the latter did so at a higher rate, as 5 authors (from a total of 73) account for 34% of the social science presence in the newspaper, while two authors produced 8% of academic

presence in Al-Ahram. There are better ratios of plurality in other newspapers, as greater interest in the social sciences seems to correlate with a greater effort to diversify the sources of knowledge presented to the reader.

Table 16 contains a descending arrangement of writers with newspaper presence based on the number of each author's articles during the period of our survey. We included 32 figures who wrote 6 or more articles. It seems clear from this arrangement that seasoned authors with a long history of research output such as As-Sayyid Yassin and Ridwan As-Sayyid are at the forefront of the list. This indicates

that the standards followed by newspapers in assessing quality are consistent with those of the scientific community in its academic form, notwithstanding of course differences in the styles of handling topics. This observation may also carry another meaning: the researchers themselves acquire a greater ability to address a wider audience the greater their accumulated practical experience is. Such ability does not receive the recognition it deserves in the academic community, despite some contemporary trends encouraging its recognition (Burawoy 2005, Brewer 2013). It is worth mentioning here that the selection of seasoned newspapers has provided us with indicators of the general choices either of elites or of traditional audience of the Arab press. It is possible that choosing the sample in this way may have unintentionally excluded the new generation of younger authors.

But in general, the survey results indicate that social sciences in newspapers are still male dominated. We only find 3 women out of 32 productive authors in this part of the public sphere. This may be an indicator of the actual gender distribution of academic and research disciplines, or of newspapers' preference for more totalistic themes, which would increase the presence of the authors who are interested in discussing issues in this way. However, we must also not forget the generational differences that also play a role, as newspapers' preference for senior authors means a greater representation for age groups among academics distinguished by an overwhelming male presence.

The final observation of note in Table 16 concerns the distinctive character of the social science scholar in the public sphere: it is a person who combines the aptitudes of the academic and intellectual, that is, a person armed with a totalistic point of view and interested in the general dialogues and debates permeating the public sphere, someone capable of adding material that transcends the usual offerings, but in a comprehensible format that employs relative exactness in expression, and is presented as an independent view. Ideologically, social science scholars in this part of the public sphere prefer a combination of liberalism, leftism, and traditionalism in their presentations, the relative weight of each component varying from one case to the other.

**Most Commonly Featured Writers in Newspapers**

Rank	Writer's Name	# of Articles
1	As-Sayyid Yassin	25
2	Ridwan As-Sayyid	20
3	Sa'id Bensa'id Al-Alawi	15
4	Amal Musa	12
4	Hussein Shubakshi	12
6	Nabil Abd Al-Fattah	11
7	Hisham Salih	10
8	Jabir Asfour	9
8	Aminah Khayri	9
8	Muta' Safadi	9
8	Mohamad Abd Al-Hakam Diab	9
12	Bashir Musa Nafi'	8
12	Shafiq Nathim Al-Ghabra	8
12	Iyad Abu Shaqra	8
15	Ma'moun Fandi	7
15	Jabir Habib Jabir	7
15	Mohamad Sayyid Rassass	7
15	Salah Salem	7
15	Samir Murcus	7
15	Ibrahim Darwish	7
15	Madawi Ar-Rashid	7
15	Sa'id Ash-Shihabi	7
23	Georges Goha	6
23	Dima Tariq Tahboub	6
23	Walid Abi Murshid	6
23	Mohamad Abd As-Sattar Al-Badri	6
23	Taha Abd Al-Aleem	6
23	Nader Farjani	6
23	Mustafa Al-Fiqqi	6
23	Karam Al-Hilou	6
23	Majed Kayali	6
23	Khalid Ghazal	6

Table 16

Source: Same as Figure 56

## A Perspective on Electronic Presence: Al-Mudun

Al-Mudun is the relatively recent website of a newspaper with an exclusively cyberspace presence, in which we find an attempt to employ the possibilities particular to this domain. In contrast to print journals, Al-Mudun does not present events as “news”, because it views itself as an electronic analytic newspaper rather than a news website. Any event is immediately presented in an analytical way that links together the two phases before and after the event. Here we find a phenomenon that is more common today in e-journals than in older print journals: presenting social sciences in a form connected to a clear political position. Although both electronic and print journals are similar in that strict academic standards do not apply to them, it seems that cyberspace provides the journals that use it exclusively with greater space to adopt the positions of groups that are probably larger than would be visible if we only see them through print journals that need to cross borders within the Arab world. For instance, according to an interview with its editor, Al-Mudun e-journal represents the “Lebanese and Arab civil democratic movement, the moderate line, and constitutes one of the platforms combatting tyranny”. Here we see a phenomenon quite different from that of the academic website Aranthropos, as the community

mentioned by Al-Mudun is a social current, even though no particular party or organization represents it as whole. Accordingly, current events become opportunities to highlight positions, as the website assumes that an understanding of events cannot otherwise be reached. Therefore, the position of the author as an opinion or a judgment takes the first priority in all articles, directly or by implication. In this way, this e-journal is similar to a seasoned cultural periodical, namely Al-Adab discussed earlier. Al-Adab also stressed the author’s position in understanding reality, including his choice in method of analysis and its application. But we also observe that this has an effect on both the quantity and quality of presence of social science scholars in the medium. Out of 55 articles we monitored in Al-Mudun related to social sciences, the authors who work in the academic sphere as social science researchers and scholars only form a small minority, or 8%, of all authors, but they produced 22% of the total number of articles. We can then safely conclude that their quantitative presence far exceeds their actual number. Obviously, articles written by professional social science scholars (such as Ahmad Baydoun) had a more academic character than those written by others. According to Al-Mudun’s editor, the problem facing the journal is that some of the academic authors are unable to continue writing in a popular press

format. This problem is similar to the one we saw in the relationship between civil society organizations and social science scholars. There are no permanent or institutionally programmed relationships, only individual efforts that bear fruit when exerted.

## Social Sciences in Television

Beginning in the 1990s, Arab satellite channels began occupying ever-increasing space in the common Arab public sphere. For this reason, it was necessary for us to include in this survey a sample of the channels that enjoy a wide presence in the common Arab public sphere, notably those that have appeal beyond the confines of any single country. The survey aims to determine the nature of social sciences (if any) in documentary and interview programs, which have a wider margin of possibility than other program types for employing more learned forms in presenting issues. **Due to the large number of programs, we limited our observation period for this study to six months, from the beginning of September 2014 to the end of February 2015.**

Initially, the plan for our survey was to select 10 programs broadcast by 5 satellite channels. But due to the logistical problems posed by some channels ceasing production of their programs as of 2015 and the difficulty of finding programs that satisfy our requirements, we

had to adjust our sample selection plan. **After a comprehensive survey of 30 satellite channels directed at the Arab world, we selected 10 programs that satisfied our criteria from six different channels. The channels we selected include four Arab channels that broadcast both locally and regionally: Al-Mayadeen, Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, and Al-Manar. Two Arabic-speaking foreign channels were also selected: BBC Arabic and Sky News Arabic. After another comprehensive survey, we excluded political programs about current events, news broadcasts, and everything with no connection to social sciences. In the end, we selected the following interview, documentary, and social programs: from Al-Mayadeen we selected "Kharej Al-Qayd" and "Watha'iqi Al-Mayadeen"; from Al-Jazeera, "Taht Al-Mijhar" and "Alam Al-Jazeera"; from Al-Arabiya, "Rawafid" and "Watha'iqi Al-Arabiya"; from BBC Arabic, "Dunyana" and Al-Mashhad; from Al-Manar, "Habbat Misk"; and finally, from Sky News Arabic, "An Qurb".**

We selected a random sample of episodes from each program to analyze content. The study took into account the necessity for compatibility between observation standards utilized here and those used to identify social science presence in all other frameworks of the public sphere. This meant the exclusion of material of a daily news character, including cultural

news and news about scientific meetings. **Monitoring was confined to material that included the analysis or presentation of a social science concept (such "autonomy", "sustainable development", "inequality", "civil society", and so on); or a learned presentation of the material that transcends the generalities associated with widespread concepts (such as "democracy", "revolution", "liberalism", "the state", "the clan", "capitalism", "urbanization", and so on); or expository material (such as social science book presentation, or the biography of a social scientist); or the treatment of a certain social issue or phenomenon in a way that clearly employs social science expertise or research.**

We tried through this survey to arrive at an initial perspective on two questions relating to social science presence in satellite channels: 1) What is the level of depth of learned analysis directed at an Arab audience? 2) What are the most prominent topics treated by social science means, whether through in-depth or common form?

## Level of Depth

It was necessary for this monitoring to separate the common employment of the social sciences from a deeper one in Arab television. Obviously, this separation could not be devised according to academic standards,

but according to standards better suited to the nature of television as non-specialized media directed at a public audience, despite the fact that television does occasionally employ methods suited to its nature so as to provide some sort of learned vision in selected programs. Viewed from this angle, it seemed appropriate for us to consider an episode to be employing in-depth knowledge if it contained at least three of the following forms of treatment:

- Hosting specialists and experts and providing them with the opportunity to pass on their expertise and some of their research findings related to the subject of the episode.
- Referring to specialized reports that employ evidence, or relying on scientific studies and reports.
- A basic overview of the literature concerning the concept or phenomenon discussed in the episode.
- Adopting diversity, intersectionality, or cross-references in introducing analytic approaches.
- Using scientific concepts, explaining them, and connecting them with the components of the phenomenon discussed in the episode.
- Connecting the phenomenon

discussed in the episode structurally to its components.

- Adopting methodologies and steps during the course of the episode that emulate scientific research methods.
- Gradually presenting ideas from micro-units to macro-entities (or the opposite) during the analysis of phenomena.
- Supporting the analysis from surveys to target groups, or inversely basing the analysis on such surveys.
- The guest's usage of self-dialogue or self-critique when presenting an approach to arrive at results that are more learned.
- Building the episode on an unsettled question as a means to launch a dialogue or scrutiny and to allude to the subject's need for deep analysis.

In contrast to an in-depth treatment of topics, treatment was classified as common when it ignored the above standards and replaced them with others distinguished by the following features:

- Presenting concepts and phenomena in a shallow manner without seeking a deeper or evidence-based insight into them.
- Depending on personal experiences and testimonies without any proof of their capacity

for being generalized or compared.

- Falling into narrative contexts instead of analytic ones, including in cases that seek to provide depth in presentation.
- Confining analysis to the surface of issues, such as identity or social practices or habits.
- Directing analysis to the popularization of a specific idea or political group, or presenting facts for explicit or implicit commercial promotion.
- The dominance of descriptive, emotional, or impressionist characters in presentation.

Table 17 shows that less than 25% of the episodes of documentary and interview programs invoke social sciences in a way that make these sciences useful to the public sphere. In more than 75% of the episodes, social sciences are present only in common forms, that is, without adding anything useful to the issue at hand, whether in terms of quality of or approach to analysis. It also worth noting the variation between not only programs, but also channels. For instance, the highest percentages of in-depth treatment are observed in the two programs from Al-Arabiya (40% and 33% of episodes), while the lowest were found in BBC Arabic and Al-Manar. We must add here that our observations in this regard are preliminary, requiring



**How Social Issues Are Discussed in 10 Shows Aired on 6 Arabic Satellite Channels**

Table 17

Name of Show	Channel	Type of Show	Frequency	Broadcast Time (Beirut Time)	Reruns During the Week	Number of Targeted Episodes	# and % of Episodes by Type of Discussion	
							Regular Discussion: Number (Percentage)	In-depth Discussion Number (Percentage)
Kharej Al-Qayd	Al-Mayadeen	Talk Show	Weekly	Sunday, 7pm	0	23	17 (74%)	6 (26%)
Watha'iqi Al-Mayadeen	Al-Mayadeen	Documentary	Every 2 weeks	Different Days, 11pm	0	12	9 (75%)	3 (25%)
Taht Al-Mijhar	Al-Jazeera	Documentary	Weekly	Wednesday, 5:05pm	2	10	8 (80%)	2(20%)
Alam Al-Jazeera	Al-Jazeera	Documentary	Weekly	Sunday, 6:30pm	4	27	20 (74%)	7 (26%)
Rawafid	Al-Arabiya	Talk Show	Weekly	Wednesday	3	25	15 (60%)	10 (40%)
Watha'iqi Al-Arabiya	Al-Arabiya	Documentary	Weekly 10 Days	Unclear	0	6	4 (67%)	2 (33%)
Dunyana	BBC Arabic	Talk Show	Weekly	Friday, 9:05pm	0	23	20 (87%)	3 (13%)
Al-Mashhad	BBC Arabic	Talk Show	Weekly	Monday, 7:30pm	4	24	21 (88%)	3 (12%)
Habbat Misk	Al-Manar	Social	Daily	Morning	13	26	23 (88%)	3 (12%)
'An Kathab	Sky News Arabic	Documentary	Weekly	Friday, Afternoon	0	23	17 (74%)	6 (26%)
<b>Total</b>						<b>199</b>	<b>154 (77%)</b>	<b>45 (23%)</b>

**Source:** Kasr, Ubadah. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in E-magazines in the Arab Region". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

further and more comprehensive study to confirm (or disprove) them. We also need to study the decision-making backgrounds in television channels, and how they lead to different results. Most

importantly, we do need a longer observation period to monitor potential patterns or causes that may lead to improvement or decline in quality of learned exposition in a program.

### Relationship Between Scientific Quality and Broadcast Frequency in One Week\*

Table 18

Number of Reruns During the Week	1 Time	3 Times	4 Times	5 Times	14 Times
Number of Shows	5	1	1	2	1
Average Percentage of In-depth Discussion	25%	20%	40%	19%	12%

**Source:** Kasr, Ubadah. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in E-magazines in the Arab Region". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

\* Based on 10 programs broadcasted by 6 Arabic satellite televisions

The survey's results suggest some relationship between the scientific quality of a program and how often its episodes are re-aired during the week. The programs with the best quality receive a moderate level of repeated broadcast in comparison with others, while the programs with a reduced quality receive the highest number of repeated broadcasts. However, the most consistently recurring pattern is a low level of repeated broadcast for programs with a medium level of scientific quality. Half of the programs in our sample broadcast their episodes only once a week, providing their

audiences with an in-depth treatment of a topic in 25% of its total episodes, and common treatment in the other 75%. But as all the programs in our sample did include high quality episodes (in various proportions), this in itself shows some great latent potential for various documentary and dialogue programs in Arab and Arab-speaking satellite channels to enhance the learned content directed at the Arab viewer. This can be done through the greater employment of the methods used in the high quality episodes, summarized above in the list of criteria for in-depth forms of topic treatment.

## Topics Present in Documentary and Dialogue Programs

Our survey of the sample of Arab programs in satellite channels extracted 281 topics that have the capacity to be transformed into learned concepts based on the manner of treatment. These include 72 central topics and 209 peripheral ones connected to the central topics. Quantitative analysis revealed that the Arab Spring took the lead during the time of our survey, just as was the case with all the frameworks of the public sphere. The difference is that in the case of television this interest is matched by an interest in terrorism, which we do not see much of in other frameworks. We must point here to the particularity of our survey period, which coincided with the rise of ISIL. We must also point out that this category encompasses all concepts relating to extremism, for which the concept of “terrorism” was maintained as a unifying term. This was not due to any analytic indications of the concept of “terrorism”, which may be worthless as a scientific or epistemic concept, but because Arab television channels adopt it more than other concepts to refer to a contemporary social phenomenon. We also affirm the necessity of separating such discussions analytically from the topic of political Islam, which is an older topic and which comes fifth on the list of the topics of interest for Arab television.

Topics of Documentary and Talk Show Episodes in Satellite Channels by Presence\*

Presence	Topic			
1	Terrorism	Arab Spring		
2	Human and Citizenship Rights			
3	Communities	The State		
4	Protest Movements	Immigration		
5	Political Islam			
6	Women's Issues			
7	Civil Society	Family	Violence	
8	Tech Revolution	Development	Education	
9	Marriage	Elections	Oil	Population

Table 19

**Source:** Kasr, Ubadah. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in E-magazines in the Arab Region". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

\* Monitoring was limited to the first 9 ranks due to the large number of topics that have equal presence starting the 10th rank.

It is clear from the survey that other major topics relevant to the “Arab Spring” (despite the difference in the contexts of their presentation) are present, such as “protest movements” in general, which occupied the fourth position, and the concepts of “human rights” and “citizenship rights”, which occupied second place, and which include a full package of relevant topics such as “equality”, “discrimination”, “racism”, and “justice” in all of its forms. Here emerge a number of

effects or implications relevant to this issue in topics such as “the state” and “social groups”, which share third place on the list. The concept of “the state” included everything relevant to the nature of the modern state and its future, especially its relationship with its citizens, while the concept of “social groups” included the patterns in which citizens organized themselves outside the framework of the state, such as parties, trade unions, sects, clans, professional associations or any other group structure. Related to the latter is the concept of “civil society”—which maintained 7th place on our list--as it belongs to interests in organizing society outside the state.

Finally, we must highlight the significant presence of women’s issues at a rank similar to that present in other public sphere frameworks, especially newspapers. This may mean that we are facing a major social transformation, especially since the women’s issues with the greatest presence in this case relate to questions of rights, participation, and citizenship, discussions that far exceed in number traditional discussions of women’s roles in the orbit of the family (7th position) and marriage (9th position).

Despite the continued presence of these traditional concerns in the top nine ranks of social subjects which interest Arab television, the interest in them remain below that

in modernist and emancipatory discussions of women’s issues. These, in turn, seem connected to a broad package of comprehensive emancipatory and civil concepts in television, just as is the case elsewhere across the Arab public sphere.

## Social Sciences in Popular Magazines

**In this report, we address social science presence in popular magazines in an exploratory manner that does not claim comprehensive coverage inasmuch as it aims to make initial assessments of the nature of social sciences in this domain. Accordingly, we limited our evaluation to four magazines distinguished by a long history and wide circulation: two monthly magazines (“Al-Arabi” from Kuwait, and “Al-Majallah” from London) and two weekly magazines from Egypt (“Hawwa”, a veteran women’s magazine, and “Rose El-Youssef,” an opinions magazines with a long history in the world of journalism). For the purposes of identifying and classifying social sciences in this domain, we used the same standard used for newspapers and other frameworks in the public sphere.**

We first notice that popular magazines dedicate greater space to social sciences than newspapers do, at a rate generally exceeding 10% of the pages in the magazines despite

**Percentage of Pages Dedicated to Social Sciences in 4 Popular Magazines 2010 - 2014**

Table 20

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Average # of Pages per Article
Al-Arabi	17	20	13	16	4	5
Rose Al-Youssef	6	6	2	0	0	2.6
Al-Majalla	8	19	23	20	16	3.1
Hawwa'	10	12	18	15	N/A	2
Average	10	14	14	13	10	3.2

**Source:** Hajjaj, Ali. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arab Cultural Magazines". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

some exceptions. But we needed only a little scrutiny of article content to find great qualitative differences between them that far exceed quantitative ones in their significance here. It is clear that the Kuwaiti magazine "Al-Arabi" comes in the lead without parallel in employing social sciences, as the number of pages dedicated to a single article in it significantly exceeds those for articles in the other magazines in this category. Furthermore, most of the authors of these articles are specialized researchers holding important university positions in the social sciences, most prominently the

Egyptian anthropologist, Ahmad Abu Zayd, and "Al-Arabi" editor-in-chief, Sulayman Ibrahim Al-Askari. We also find in these articles deliberateness in presentation, consideration of the historicity of social phenomena, solemnity in the treatment of ideas, and lack of rashness in employing political positions. Another permanently visible crucial element is the wide diversity of topics, in a manner redolent of the less popular cultural periodicals, reflecting this longstanding magazine's direction to the Arab world as a whole. This is evident in the prominence of four clusters that appear at almost equal

rates, all of them bearing a distinctly pan-Arab character. The first cluster includes topics such as Palestine, Zionism, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and Israeli colonial settlements. The second includes cultural issues such as those of identity, civilization, heritage, and Orientalism. The third includes concepts of modernity such as enlightenment, renaissance, development, progress, and so forth.

The final cluster includes topics related to comprehensive political change such as revolution, democracy, freedom, pluralism, authority, government, popular control, and the civic state. These main issues are followed by a great number of diverse themes, chief among them being those of a primarily modern character, such as globalization, consumerism, markets, and the like.

### Most Present Concept Groups in Al-Arabi Magazine (in Descending Order)

Table 21

1	<b>Palestine: Zionism, Arab-Israeli Conflict, Jewish Settlement, Resistance</b>
2	<b>Culture: Identity, Culture, Heritage, Orientalism, the Intellectual</b>
3	<b>Modernity: Enlightenment, Renaissance, Development, Progress</b>
4	<b>Civil Issues: Revolution, Democracy, Freedom, Plurality, Authority, Government, Popular Control, Civil State, Civil Society</b>

**Source:** Hajjaj, Ali. 2015. "Presence of Social Sciences in Arab Cultural Magazines". (Background paper for the Arab Social Science Monitor)

The monthly "Al-Majallah" and weekly "Hawwa" do not deviate from what is expected, such that we find increased interest in the Arab Spring during the survey period. This interest does take forms consistent with the general direction of both magazines, approaching revolutionary phenomena from the old vantage point of each magazine rather than employing an innovative analysis of the nature of revolutions. In such cases the published material

does not display much effort to learn from revolutions. Quite the opposite: the magazines assume the role of instructing revolutions on how they should behave, that is, according to each magazine's old epistemic perspective. In the case of "Al-Majallah", dominated by a journalistic, quasi-scientific character, interest in revolutions is largely confined to articles about political Islam, in a manner reflective of the magazine's

apprehensiveness about these currents. This can be gleaned from the fact that all the articles fail to mention a single positive thing about any of these currents and movements in any country, and even disregard all the other aspects of the revolutionary phenomenon. The level of analysis in this case is at least clearly superior to that of other magazines such as "Rose El-Youssef" that hit the rock bottom of subjectivity. It seems that the authors of "Al-Majallah", most of whom are PhD bearers, university professors, researchers, and experts, maintain interest and adherence to analytic methodology which to a certain extent rely on employing concepts, analyzing social phenomena, finding connections between given facts, utilizing references, and gradually arriving at conclusions before settling on a position perhaps known in advance. This methodology at least provides the position with a greater measure of credibility and satisfies the demand for a quasi-scientific format. Although not void of errors, this style at least accustoms the reader to expect some level of professionalism in analysis.

We also find in this case some attempts to benefit from "Al-Majallah"'s cyberspace presence to add new types of knowledge that go beyond those provided in the print magazine. Despite the newness of this form, these attempts aim to reproduce the pattern that gave this publication cultural capital that

calls for its preservation, and that whenever possible necessitates avoiding ventures whose results may not be certain. Here it becomes clear to us that "Al-Majallah", which was launched in London in 1980 as one of the publications of the Saudi Research and Publishing Company, seeks to maintain its position as an outlet for studying "the ideas that hide behind the news", as per the magazine's description of its mission. It endeavors to propose deep analysis, providing policy makers in the region with its recommendations. This, however, does not negate "Al-Majallah"'s innovative use of cyberspace, such as its connection with the website of the journal Foreign Affairs, through which "Al-Majallah" selects articles and translates them into Arabic.

Generally speaking, the articles in "Al-Majallah" attempt to distinguish themselves by addressing phenomena and concepts in a different, sober, quasi-scientific way as compared to similar publications, even though it does not rise to the level of serious scientific websites such as Aranthropos, which we pointed to earlier. Nevertheless, and generally speaking, "Al-Majallah" does maintain the continuity of identity it formed for itself during the era of print publication. Articles in it still to a certain extent employ concepts, analyze social phenomena, connect data, utilize references, and gradually draw conclusions. Moreover, the academic identity of its authors reflects the distinguished

presence of social sciences in a journal that is neither academic nor specialized.

"Hawwa" differs from the rest by not being a general magazine, but one that focuses on women's issues and their daily lives, including issues such as rights and participation in addition to matters of traditional daily life such as the family, childhood, beauty, homes, fashion, marriage, and so forth. Before the Arab Spring, these topics took up the entire space dedicated to quasi-scientific thought in "Hawwa". We notice then a dearth of issues relating to social change (such as poverty, the culture of difference, or civil society). These together occupied no more than 1% of the total number of articles, in comparison to the 33% that was dedicated to family issues, followed by children's health, education, and exams.

However, with the beginning of the Arab Spring we notice increased interest in revolution that we did not at all find during the previous period. During 2011-2013, the topic of "revolution" occupied nearly as many articles as family issues. Women's political participation also emerged more prominently during that period. Generally, the fact that this magazine's has a specific rather than general target audience defines to a certain extent the role and form of social sciences therein. Here general phenomena such as "revolution" take a practical direction, which is deduced from

the centrality of women's issues, especially as approached from the particular point of view of a segment of middle class women. We cannot generally speaking say that we witness a learned thought in this magazine at the level that we see in "Al-Arabi" or even "Al-Majallah". "Hawwa"'s contributions take the form of quick glances that provide the reader with a taste of what science is, even if it is only a faint taste if compared with other journals.

It is clear from this exposition that popular magazines vary greatly in terms of the learned quality of their content. It should also be clear by now that we presented them in a manner that reflects qualitative arrangement, beginning with higher quality employment of social sciences in "Al-Arabi", followed by "al-Majallah", then "Hawwa". "Rose El-Youssef" takes the bottom position of our sample in this respect, especially during the deathly struggle over power in Egypt that took place immediately after the revolution, and more particularly in the period beginning in 2012 onwards. In that period we witness the total disappearance of what can be called social sciences, after a period of humble presence not exceeding 6% of the total articles. The topics directly reflect the political struggle prevailing in Egypt during the period of our survey. Issues such as "political Islam", "sectarianism", "secularity", "takfir" [rendering other people as



infidels], and the future of liberalism in Egypt, take the lead in the magazine's scope of interests. In looking into the actual content, we do not find any in-depth discussion of any of these issues. Rather, we confront a style that can be called a "quick glance" approach that aims to reach a definite political position as quickly as possible, without the least concern for a learned understanding of any of these issues. It is clear in this case that the priority given to political stances at the expense of learned understanding of phenomena, is linked to a preparedness to give up science altogether. This becomes most clear in this case, one year into the revolution and the beginning of Egypt's political polarization.

This case poses many questions about the import of social sciences in the public sphere, and especially in conditions where great changes take place in the general political scene, and new possibilities for participation emerge, as seemed to be the case at the beginning of the Arab Spring. It is easy to say that social sciences play a guiding role whose importance increases during times that require innovative rather than prefixed knowledge.

These are the characteristics of revolutionary circumstances, where we witness a collapse of previous assumptions about society's essence and capacities, and where learned thought present in the public sphere gains exceptional significance due to an unusually broad interest in listening to that which is new and promising. However, taking advantage of this condition requires that scholars and intellectuals fulfill tasks and roles that only they can play. This entails assessing reality from a certain distance that allows for analysis and exploration of the nature of phenomena, rather than sinking into the vagaries of daily struggles and merely reproducing political stances that give us nothing that is not already known. Such stances do not provide the new reality with serious, creative forms of knowledge capable of transcending the usual political quagmire that does not suit revolutionary conditions in any case. But the quagmire will drag the revolutionary energy into it, in the absence of innovative choices that can only be provided by those capable of employing a deeper and more comprehensive perspective than is the norm.

# Conclusion

The surveys conducted in this report were not expected to yield such surprising results as to disclose unprecedented growth in the social sciences in the Arab world across the various platforms under study.

An initial conclusion lies in the inevitable recognition of accelerated growth in social science presence across various scientific frameworks. This growth, however, cannot be compared to the growth in other sciences necessitated by the technological advances of the 21st century, which motivate younger generations and researchers alike to keep pace in advancing their various research approaches. Likewise, these advances require universities, research centers, professional societies, civil society, and the media to provide researchers with considerable space and time commensurate to their needs.

Before delving into the detailed conclusions arrived at from the study of social science presence in various frameworks, it behooves us to mention several elements that played a prominent role in paving the way for these conclusions and recommendations.

First: the frameworks to which the study was confined. Specific samples

were taken from specific countries, encompassing universities, research centers, professional societies, scholarly periodicals, civil society, cultural periodicals, and television channels.

Second: the circumstances surrounding the growth of these sciences in the region, which are more or less the same circumstances that accompanied the completion of this study throughout its stages, from methodological application to arrival at precise, factual results commensurate with the nature of any scientific research. If there is one concept that can be considered a shorthand for these circumstances, it is that of the Arab Spring and the totality of its consequences and its aftermath at all levels.

Third: the obstacles that prevented the completion of some samples without however preventing the completion of a reliable form of the entire study or detracting from the significance of the studied samples and the conclusions derived therefrom.

Taking the above factors into consideration, and based on the results supported by original data, we can draw a general conclusion suitable to the overall framework of

the study while maintaining some reservations regarding its specific frameworks. The takeaway is this: the social sciences have witnessed both quantitative and qualitative development in knowledge production across various fields in the Arab region. By delving deeper into the particulars of the knowledge frameworks encompassed by the study, we arrive at conclusions that detail the nature of the presence of the social sciences in each individual framework.

## Universities

Universities may appear to be the self-evident place to seek powerful social science presence. However, it is clear that social sciences in Arab universities have massive room for growth before they can attain globally recognized ranks and participate effectively in shaping the Arab future. It is unmistakably apparent that, wherever social sciences appear in Arab universities, they are dominated by the rhetoric of modernity, manifest in disciplines that are self-consciously connected to the projects of modernity and modernization—at the expense of disciplines that address the culture, tradition, and historical heritage of society, like anthropology and social history.

Approaching the state of social sciences in both long-established and newly-founded Arab universities reveals that social science presence in its traditional forms is still

confined to no more than 48% of Arab universities. It is possible that the young age of most of these universities mainly accounts for this low percentage, although we find the highest rates of social science presence exhibited in the Arab Maghreb (particularly Algeria and Morocco). An examination of university offerings reveals that economics easily prevails over all other disciplines, especially anthropology, which is at the tail end of the overall ranks of social science presence in Arab universities.

## Research Centers

In our approach, we cannot separate the role of universities in proliferating social sciences from that of research centers, almost half of which operate from within universities, providing an environment rich in research tools and content to facilitate the researcher's work. This does not undermine the significance of independent research centers, which are distinguished by high productivity of an interdisciplinary nature. This report reveals that the increased growth of independent research centers may be traced back to two factors: First, the rise of a new generation of Arab social science scholars whose accommodation is beyond university capacities. Second, the new circumstances and the prominent changes in the Arab region granting civil society a greater role, greater space, and a greater margin for action.

We view the relatively significant increase in the number of research centers in the Arab world as a positive phenomenon that provides an independent framework for social science work outside universities. Although research center density across various Arab countries generates uneven research density between them, research centers nonetheless remain indispensable for knowledge production. The best proof of this lies in the fact that these centers produce the majority of scholarly periodicals in the Arab world.

## Scholarly Periodicals

In line with proposing that the relationship between universities and research centers should be viewed as organic, it would be misleading to separate research centers from scholarly periodicals when our survey shows that independent research centers play the greatest role in periodical growth.

The growth in the number of periodicals occurs concurrently with marked quantitative growth in a significant portion of the social sciences. However, the survey here also highlighted a weakness in periodicals' utilization of cyberspace, as evidenced by the fact that most of them do not issue an electronic version of the publication.

The results of the study reveal links between a periodical's country of issue and the highest diversity

levels in researcher nationality and countries under study. Lebanon comes at the forefront here. Other indicators of scientific quality vary between periodicals, although we note a significant number of theoretical articles in general as well as paucity in joint research. Among periodicals with shared social science disciplines, the figures in our sample show three disciplines occupying the most space: sociology, political science, and history, which together account for almost three-quarters of the articles. With no more than 5% of articles each, psychology, economics, and anthropology exhibit comparable levels of presence.

It is perhaps noteworthy and useful to indicate that the presence of the three most prominent disciplines in periodicals (history, sociology, and political science) exceeds the relative presence of the same disciplines in universities. Despite its meager presence in all domains, anthropology is the real surprise appearing in periodicals at three times the rate exhibited in universities. This points to the importance of scholarly periodicals in highlighting some of the disciplines buried beneath the hegemony of other knowledge frameworks, especially in universities.

## Professional Societies

Clear acceleration in the pace at which professional societies are established demonstrates that social sciences in the Arab world are

moving in the direction of creating their own identities. The report studies the periodicals issued by professional societies and the level of social science presence therein, concluding here that economics has the greatest institutional momentum among the social sciences in the Arab world. Studying the data reveals a point of weakness wherein most professional societies address a local audience, as evidenced by 59 out of 68 of them working within the framework of only one Arab country.

Although in-depth examination of the content produced by professional societies requires a separate study, we nonetheless provided a preliminary framing of that content here due to the importance of these associations as fundamental knowledge cradles for the social sciences, even though their scholarly productivity remains meager to this day.

## Civil Society

We adopted a definition of civil society as consisting of independent institutions that allow voluntary affiliation and organize themselves outside the framework of the state and political parties. A study of a sample of civil society organizations clearly reveals that they all not only utilize but also often produce social sciences in one form or the other, although they do so under the umbrella of their own goals, and not necessarily in pursuit of academic purposes.

Despite the clear dominance of objectives particular to its work, civil society still gains its strength from its emerging role as a significant part of the job market for Arab social science scholars. This is especially true given that most of these organizations aim to communicate with a wider audience. The takeaway in this context is that civil society utilizes social sciences to diverse effects, generating what can be called “quasi-scientific” communities capable of producing innovative, if non-academic, knowledge.

## Cultural Periodicals

Survey results of five periodicals with large-scale Arab presence indicate that social sciences exhibit presence at a near-constant rate approaching 20% of the pages of the studied periodicals. This proportion demonstrates the strong connection between social sciences and prevailing cultural environments in the Arab world, although there is ample room to clarify and develop the relationship between knowledge and culture in the Arab context.

## Newspapers

Those studying social science presence might predict very high rates of presence in daily newspapers, which contain such high editorial density that surely some part must be allocated to the social sciences. However, the results of our survey of five newspapers from different countries indicate blatant weakness

in learned thought, even after accounting for the unspecialized journalistic context.

The report's focus here was on topics discussing social issues. The results were discouraging when calculated according to the adopted standards for classifying "scholarly presence". The figures on proper scientific material reflect an average not exceeding 3.3% of the total printed area in newspapers, although we can safely postulate that any newspaper can afford to allocate up to 10% of its page space to learned material without encroaching upon its status as journalism. Al-Quds newspaper takes the lead among the newspapers included in our study. By including plenty of material that falls under the social sciences umbrella, it provides a model for handling various types of learned presentation in the Arab press. The survey results find Al-Quds to be remarkable in providing diverse forms of learned exposition, divided between scientific analyses, concept presentations, book reviews, biographies, and conference reports.

## Television

Monitoring social science presence in Arab satellite channels was an interesting experience, especially when the study encompassed five prominent satellite channels and a survey of programs whose content promised to transcend daily news reporting. Observations of social science presence led to

the conclusion that in the surveyed episodes, there is only modest presence of an in-depth approach that may of use to the public sphere while the episodes mainly employ forms of pop social science. The Arab Spring is at the forefront of the topics discussed in the selected sample episodes. The presence of the Arab Spring was matched by that of "terrorism", which was a peak topic of interest during the survey period.

In drawing conclusions, it is worth mentioning the high levels of presence of women's issues and related discussions of rights, participation and citizenship. Even though these issues are not overwhelmingly present in Arab television, the very fact that they are on the table indicates a certain development and openness to approaching issues characterized as "traditional" and "private" by a wide audience.

In summary, social sciences continue to grow both quantitatively and qualitatively around the world, especially since the second half of the 20th century, keeping pace with the requirements of studying modern societies. However, it seems that Arab societies require greater, more concentrated experience before the time comes in which we can proclaim that they have securely housed social sciences and utilized them in all their diverse appearances across their diverse frameworks.

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## Methods and Tools

The Arab Social Science Monitor (ASSM) is a major project of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS) and aims at establishing a permanent observatory dedicated to surveying the landscape and assessing the trajectories of social science research in Arab countries. To that end, quantitative and qualitative methods are used for collecting and analyzing data on the state of Higher Education generally and the Social Sciences particularly and a resource website has been launched for the posting and dissemination of data and analysis.

The ASSM includes three main areas of research:

- The infrastructures of knowledge production in terms of institutions and resources;
- The capacities and characteristics of social science communities across the region; and
- The ability of Arab social sciences to impact global social science on the one hand and public debate and policy on the other.

Data for the ASSM is collected and compiled through various tools, the major ones being (1) a Questionnaire for an online survey of individual social scientists to be conducted

every two years, (2) a Matrix to establish a database of institutions working on social sciences and (3) background/commissioned papers for topical issues (see ASSM data collection and compilation tools section below for more details).

Data compiled and analyzed will be made available through two mechanisms: Data resources and Publications. An important resource in the first category is a searchable database that will be made available on the project website and that will include the data collected and compiled through the Questionnaire and the Matrix and other data gathering tools currently under development. In terms of publications, a key tool of the ASSM is the Arab Social Science Report (ASSR). Other publications that will be produced by the ASSM include data reports, policy briefs and analytical papers on particular issues arising from the data. The ASSM will seek to fully utilize and share the data collected and compiled.

The ASSM project is developed over two-year phases leading to the establishment of a permanent observatory by end of 2019. The pilot phase, which ended in the first quarter of 2015, focused on developing a framework that guides all

ASSM research and activities (see ASSM framework below), constructing and testing the data gathering tools (Questionnaire for individual social scientists and Matrix on institutions of social sciences) as well as on producing the first “Framing” ASSR (see ASSM Implementation section below for more details).

The Arab Social Science Report (ASSR) is a biennial publication on the state of social science research in the Arab Region and includes systematic and quantifiable analysis of data collected through the Questionnaire and the Matrix in addition to background papers written for each Report. Each Report will focus on a different aspect of the development of social science research in the region and will aim to reflect and showcase the work and voices of the region’s social science community. The ASSR will focus on broad themes of relevance to social scientists, research administrators, universities, research NGOs as well as to organizations and donors working in the field of social research and development. Following this framing ASSR, the first and second ASSRs will be released in March 2017 and March 2019 respectively.

## ASSM Framework

The framework that guides all ASSM research and activities consists of five components: Individuals, Institutions, Products, Practices and Uses. Each component focuses on different units of study as follows:

1. Institutions: Universities, Research Centers and Professional Societies
2. Individuals: Individual researchers working in the Arab countries or Arab researchers living in the diaspora, those who hold a Master’s or Doctoral degree in social science from any university in the world, and/or are involved in social science research.
3. Products: Libraries, Archives, Publishing houses, Ph.D. directories and depositories, Scientific journals, Curricula
4. Practices: Selection committees, Peer review committees, governance and resource allocation in universities and research institutions, promotion, tenure, scholarships, fellowships, academic conferences.
5. Uses: Policy making, development planning, public discourses, conferences and dissemination including traditional and new/social media.

## ASSM Data Collection And Compilation Tools

Tools for data collection and compilation for the various components of the ASSM constitute the following.

### 1. Matrix

A Matrix has been developed to compile the following information on the National context, Institutions and Products.

- National Context: Information on national context includes the following:

Population size, Youth population (17-30 yrs old), Annual national budget of the public higher education system, Public expenditure on tertiary education as % of total government expenditure, Public expenditure on tertiary education as % of GDP, Number of undergraduate students by gender, Number of graduate students by gender, Gross enrollment in tertiary education, Percent of individuals using internet, and Total national research budget.

- Universities: Universities included in the ASSM are defined as degree-granting institutions with 'university' in their name, and/or which offer at least a Bachelor's degree in two or more distinct fields, and/or which offer at least a Bachelor's degree in a social science field, and/or which offer a professional diploma in four years or more in two or more distinct fields, and/or which offer a professional diploma in four years or more in a social science field.

Universities include public, private, for-profit, non-profit, and online institutions that are officially registered in the country of their location, some of which may also be accredited in another country, or represent a branch or satellite campus. Colleges and tertiary sector specialized institutes, technical and vocational training institutions are not included in the Monitor.

Information on universities to be compiled in the Matrix include: Contact information, Campus and facili-

ties, Budget, Admissions and diplomas, Academic staff, Non-academic staff, Students, Tuition, and Scholarships. For social science departments and faculties in these universities, the following information is to be compiled: Budget by department within each faculty, Social science faculties list, Diplomas and Admission requirements per faculty, Academic staff, Students, Scholarships, Collaboration, and Curriculum.

- Research Centers: Research Centers included in the ASSM are those that are university-based, non-university based, governmental, for-profit, non-profit and branch centers of international think tanks and that conduct research (scholarly and non-scholarly) on disciplines considered social sciences for the ASSM. Multilateral development organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are not included. Research centers located outside the region were excluded. In addition, research centers that have been closed or were suspended and for which closure date is available are included in the Matrix.

Information on research centers to be compiled include: Contact information, Space and facilities, Focus, Funding, Budget, Director and Board, Researchers, Administrative staff, Publications, Events, and Grants and Fellowships.

- Professional Societies: Professional Societies included in the ASSM are those related to the disciplines con-

sidered social sciences for the ASSM.

Information on professional societies to be compiled include: Contact information, Focus, President and Board, Staff, Funding, Budget, Membership, and Events.

- Scholarly Periodicals: Periodicals included in the ASSM are publications that are issued regularly by an institution in the Arab region (eg monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, annual), reviewed by a reviewer (eg expert in the subject matter/professional editor/editorial board), part of a series of publications of substantive nature (eg scholarly and research journals/book series/journals of commentary and opinion/working papers/studies), peer-reviewed or non-peer reviewed, and current or have been discontinued.

Information on Scholarly Periodicals include: Contact information, Focus, Frequency, Format, Circulation, Size, Access, and Funding.

Of note is that data collected thus far through the Matrix includes what is publically available through the web and in existing publically available databases. These data have not yet been validated at the country-level. Validation is underway and the updated version of the Matrix will be posted on the project website once validation is complete.

Data collection methodology for the Products, Practices and Uses components will be developed in

subsequent phases of the ASSM.

## 2. Questionnaire

A questionnaire is used to collect data on Individuals through an on-line survey that is conducted biennially. The Questionnaire consists of five sections: (1) personal data (e.g. name, nationality), (2) academic education background (e.g. universities attended), (3) career path (e.g. job positions held), (4) research topics, methodology (e.g. publications), and (5) research funding.

A short and a long version of the questionnaire were developed. The short version of the questionnaire (consisting of 29 questions) was used during the pilot phase of the ASSM. The long version (consisting of 80 questions) will be used in subsequent phases (see ASSM implementation section below for more information on each phase). Both questionnaires are available in three languages: Arabic, English and French.

- Target Population and Coverage: The survey aims to cover social science researchers working in the Arab region or living in the diaspora, those who hold a Master's or Doctoral degree or equivalent in the social sciences from any university in the world, and/or are involved in social science research - whether they are engaged in research, teaching or administration.

The initial target population of the survey consisted of all social

scientists (with at least a graduate degree in a social science discipline) who are affiliated at the time of the survey with an academic institution in four focus countries (Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon). However given challenges encountered in reaching this target population within the allotted timeframe the target population was subsequently restricted to ACSS affiliates.

- Sampling Frame: Two sampling frames were used for this survey. The first sampling frame was developed in an attempt to capture the initial target population. However, due to the poor response rate received through the first sampling frame within the allotted timeframe, a second sampling frame was developed.

Sampling Frame 1: The first sampling frame of the pilot phase relied on secondary data as well as on ACSS's internal database; this is due the lack of a reliable source or database for social scientists in any of the selected countries. For this purpose, the ASSM implementing team performed an internet search of all academic institutions in the four focus countries in an attempt to construct the sampling frame.

Sampling Frame 2: The second sampling frame consisted of social scientists who are ACSS affiliates. More specifically, it consisted of grantees of, applicants to (grants

applicants, membership applicants and conference applicants) and members of the ACSS.

- Sampling method: The sampling strategy was a hybrid one. In the first phase for the first sampling frame, a random sample of universities in the four focus countries was selected from the list compiled by the ACSS. In addition to random sampling, universities that are a hub of social scientists in their respective countries were forced into the sample in order to enhance the representativeness of the sample. The selected universities were contacted by the ACSS through email and were briefed on the purpose and scope of the survey and a copy of the questionnaire was shared with them. They were requested to provide their list of social scientists to whom the questionnaire will be sent.

When it was decided to use the second sampling frame, the second phase used the ACSS list of affiliates. All individuals identified in the second sampling frame were targeted and asked to participate in the survey. Based on this list, the short questionnaire was sent to 531 individuals (ACSS grantees, applicants and members). The response rate was about 17%.

- Data collection: A consent form was developed to inform and get the consent of the survey respondents of the confidential and voluntary nature of the survey. Respondents had to electronically sign this con-

sent form prior to participating in the survey. The survey was dispatched electronically and the data collected was captured in an electronic database. Data collection took place between mid-December 2014 and end of January 2015.

### 3. Background Papers

As mentioned above, each issue of the ASSR will focus on a broad theme and the theme of this "Framing" ASSR is the "forms of presence" of social science research in the Arab World. The "forms of presence" of social sciences were examined in scholarly institutions (universities, research centers, scientific journals, and professional societies) as well as in civil society and the public sphere (including newspapers, cultural periodicals, mass-circulating periodicals, TV)

Information on the "form of presence" of social sciences in institutions – universities, research centers and professional societies - was collected and compiled in the Matrix. To assess the regional presence of social science research in the public sphere and its use by civil society/development organizations, the ACSS commissioned six research papers that served as background papers for the ASSR.

Five research papers assessed the proportion of time and of space devoted to social science in each of three media: Television, Newspapers, Magazines (popular/wide circulation magazines, intellectual/cultural

magazines and Ezines). The papers also conducted a qualitative assessment of case studies for each medium. One more paper presented case studies on the use of social science research by non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

Following are the highlights of the methodology the background papers.

- Television, Newspapers and Magazines: A sample of 10 programs in 6 television stations that broadcast regionally in Arabic language was selected and the proportion of programming time devoted to social sciences was calculated. For newspapers, a sample of 5 Arabic language newspapers distributed regionally was selected and the proportion of pages in the selected newspapers containing social sciences was calculated. The selection of the 5 newspapers was based on the most widely circulated pan-Arab newspapers according to Alexa.com (data as of Sept. 10, 2014).

Likewise for magazines, a sample of 4 Arabic language wide-circulating magazines distributed regionally, another 5 Arabic language intellectual magazines (other than academic periodicals) distributed regionally, as well as 4 Arabic language Ezines that are exclusively electronic were selected and the proportion of pages in thee selected magazines with social sciences content was estimated.

The period covered in the background paper was January 2010 to

December 2014. For newspapers, the random sample consisted of 3 days per month (eg day 10, day 20, and day 30) for each of the past 5 years, with the exception of one newspaper for which the period covered extended from August 2013 to September 2014.

The background papers on the presence of social science research in television, newspapers and magazines included analysis or presentation of a social science concept such as self-governance, sustainable development, inequality and civil society. They also included scientific assessments of a popular/common concept such as democracy, revolution, liberalism, government/the state, the tribe, capitalism and urbanization. The assessments did not include material of daily nature such as daily news including cultural news and news about scientific meetings.

The background papers on newspapers and magazines included review material such as social science book reviews or the biography of a social scientist. The assessment also included material containing a scientific overview of a social science concept.

- Civil society organizations: For civil society organizations, case studies were presented on how the use of social science research impacted social development programs, policy dialogue, public debates and whether there was outreach

and dissemination to different audiences whether national or regional. The case studies included what the social science component consisted of, details of the personnel involved and whether national or regional expertise was used.

For civil society, the case studies were for one regional NGO and 4 country-level NGOs.

## ASSM Implementation

The ASSM will be implemented in phases leading to the establishment of a permanent observatory of Arab social science as follows:

### 1. Pilot Phase of the ASSM

The pilot data collection phase extended from January 2014 through the first quarter of 2015 and focused on Institutions and Individuals and to a lesser extent on the Products. It also included data on the National Context.

Data collection on Institutions and Products in the pilot phase was restricted to fields for which information was publicly available through web searches and document reviews/directory reviews (please see the Data Sources section for a list of the documents and directories).

In addition, for Products, one paper was commissioned to conduct a content analysis of the type of articles published in scholarly social science periodicals published by

various types of institutions in the Arab world and to conduct a critical analysis of the topics, methods and quality of published material.

The pilot phase served as a test run for the tools that have been developed, the ASSR as well as the process involved. A major focus of the pilot phase was the production of the first "Framing" ASSR to lay the groundwork for the methodology as well as the thematic agenda of future reports.

## 2. First Phase of the ASSM

The first phase started in the second quarter of 2015 and extends through the first quarter of 2017 and will benefit from the lessons learned during the pilot phase. It will phase in some components and fields of the ASSM that were not covered during the pilot phase. More specifically, it will (1) collect information on Individuals using the long questionnaire, (2) expand data collection on Institutions and Products to include fields for which data are not publicly available, partly through targeted outreach and (3) begin collecting data on the Practices and Uses components of the ASSM.

## 3. Second Phase of the ASSM

The second phase of the ASSM extends from the second quarter of 2017 through the first quarter of 2019 and will phase in the final components and fields of the ASSM. For example, it will expand data collection on disciplines to include the humanities.

## 4. Permanent Observatory

The permanent observatory will be established by the end of the second phase when all the tools would have been developed and all the fields of all the components of the ASSM covered.

### Disciplines Covered

The following core disciplines and multi-disciplinary studies were considered social sciences for the pilot phase of the ASSM: Anthropology, Economics, History, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Cultural Studies, Development Studies and Gender Studies. Other disciplines, such as humanities, may be included in subsequent phases of the ASSM

### Geographic Coverage

The ASSM covers the 22 Arab countries that are member states in the League of Arab States: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Emirates, Iraq, Jordan, KSA, Kuwait, Libya, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen.

### Data Sources

In the pilot phase, data sources included searches of publicly available information in addition to the following documents and directories:

- Marseille Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI). 2010. Strategic Mapping of Think Tanks, Mediterranean Countries and Beyond.



- Foundation for the Future. 2013. Arab Think Tanks Directory: Policy-Oriented Research Centers amid Transitions.

- American University of Beirut, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, Research and Policy database [www.arabpolicyresearch.com/](http://www.arabpolicyresearch.com/)

- UPenn Global Think Tank Directory [www.gotothinktank.com/](http://www.gotothinktank.com/)

- Association of Arab Universities database [www.university-directory.eu/Jordan/Association-of-Arab-Universities.html#.VCq5-2eSx4J](http://www.university-directory.eu/Jordan/Association-of-Arab-Universities.html#.VCq5-2eSx4J)

- Lebanese Association of Educational Studies. 2013. Directory of Universities in the Arab Countries. Version 1, January 2014.

- International Association of Universities <http://www.iau-aiu.net/content/international-handbook-universities>

- Center for Arab Unity Studies (CAUS) [www.caus.org.lb/](http://www.caus.org.lb/)

- E-Marefa <http://www.e-marefa.net/>

- Dar Al Mandumah [www.mandumah.com/](http://www.mandumah.com/)

“Any contemporary society must embrace a high quality presence for the social sciences in one form or another in every context, including technical institutes and schools. The social sciences are one of the most important means for forming the modern citizen: a person who questions received wisdom and through this questioning acquires a better ability to innovate and discover; a person who views her reality from a distance that permits her to gain a broader perspective than would be possible by being immersed in it; an informed person, not because she has memorized facts, but because she deploys science in her daily life as easily as she eats, drinks, and socializes. In other words, a person who is on such intimate terms with science that she makes her life suitable to science and science relevant to her life.”

Mohammed Bamyeh

#### About the author:

Dr. Mohammed Bamyeh is Professor of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh and the editor of International Sociology Reviews. He received his PhD in Sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1990. He previously held the Hubert Humphrey chair in International Studies at Macalester College in Saint Paul, Minnesota, and the SSRC-MacArthur Fellowship in International Peace and Security. He taught at Georgetown University, New York University, and the University of Massachusetts. His areas of interest include Islamic studies, sociology of religion, political and cultural globalization, civil society and social movements, and comparative social and political theory. His books include Intellectuals and Civil Society in the Middle East (2012); Anarchy as Order: The History and Future of Civic Humanity (2009); Of Death and Dominion (2007); The Ends of Globalization (2000); and The Social Origins of Islam: Mind, Economy, Discourse (1999), winner of the Albert Hourani Honorable Mention from the Middle East Studies Association.

# FIRST REPORT 2015

## المجلس العربي للعلوم الاجتماعية

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