

Like on Different Planets? Lebanese Social Scientists in Their Scientific Communities

Jonathan Kriener

Social sciences and humanities (SSH) at Arab universities are often described as suffering from a lack of academic freedom. However, institutional autonomy and the individual academic's opportunities and constraints vary considerably among Arab institutions. Individuals con-

ducting social sciences and humanities under different configurations of local, regional and international influences from the state, the market and the civil society are not equally affected. One problem made evident by existing research literature on Arab social sciences

is the comparably weak networking capacity of its academic publishing and library systems. It suggests an over-dependence on international systems, a lack of direct communication amongst local and regional scientific communities, and intellectual bigotry. This article sheds light on the question of how Arab institutions and individuals cope with this particular shortcoming in their academic system. It focuses on the correlations between institutional and individual autonomy as measured by the modes of decision making and funding. The article will also explore the relationship between an institution's autonomy and its interconnectedness as measured by its library services and by the references in faculty's dissertations. Data stem from interviews with faculty, surveys among students, and visits to libraries of two different universities in Lebanon, which are analyzed in comparison. Moreover, several networking initiatives are characterized by which social scientists in the region tackle this problem. Through private initiative, these academics seem to recover regional coherence based on Arab language and experience.

Keywords: Connectivity; Governance; Higher Education; Language Gap; Lebanon; Social Sciences

Introduction¹

Apart from macro-statistical reports on the development of higher education and sciences in the Arab world,² few academics have addressed the status, role, and self-conception of the SSH in Arab countries on a more individual and content-oriented level.³ Their conclusions were that Arab social sciences either uncritically adhere to Western concepts inherited from colonial power relations (Nasser and Abouche-did), are imposed on by the international agencies that finance their projects, and are overly influenced by the practices of the international publishing business (Hanafi, *Donor Community*; "Social Sciences Research;" Kabbanji, "Internationalization"), or are highly self-referential, even bigoted in their Islamic or Arab nationalist views (Badawi; Yassin; Sayyid; Salamé; Kawtharani).

The prior of these authors focus on donor communities and so perceived dependencies, the latter on content analysis. Except for Badawi, who deals exclusively and systematically with Egyptian public universities, these works are impressionist, i.e. dealing with examples from the authors' own academic experience.

Later, in another article, Hanafi ("Les Systèmes universitaires") researched Arab SSH publications systematically by counting references in Arab social studies

works and by interviewing scholars in the field. He categorized the references in order to discover to what extent Arab social scientists are aware of the output of their colleagues. His findings suggest that there are two segregated realms of SSH in Arab countries: One at public institutions, where social scientists teach, research, and publish in Arabic, the other one at private universities of foreign provenience, such as the *American University of Beirut (AUB)*, *American University in Cairo*, *Université St. Joseph*, *Lebanese American University (LAU)*. According to Hanafi, the latter are disconnected from their Arab environment because the criteria for publishing internationally demand the perception of international secondary literature and compliance with international academic standards. Therefore, these academics fall short of appropriate participation in local debates. On the other hand, the researchers in the national systems, who write in Arabic, are isolated from the international current state of research because of their lack of foreign languages and their limited academic facilities including libraries and online media. Assuming, as an academic standard, that scholars should first ensure the originality of their intended research subject, both groups would therefore be

substandard in the context of the global scientific community.

Does something exist among Arab social scientists that can be termed a regional scientific community? If so, does it have the capacity to anticipate social processes and give advice in a region in which diplomatic and economic ties to Europe and the US are often more intensive than ties to neighboring states? This article asks what opportunities and constraints form the coordinates of academic work from two sample universities in Lebanon, and it furthermore seeks to reveal what patterns of connectivity result therefrom. Part 1 will be dedicated to the institutional structure of the two sample institutions from which the data were taken: the *Lebanese University (LU)* and the *LAU*. In part 2, I will present a small set of data gathered by counting out references in PhD theses written by faculty, who work in these two institutions, regarding the origins of these references. Part 3, finally, will present a few initiatives to build a functional scientific community among SSH researchers in and about the Arab region.

Two Environments for Academic Work: Lebanese University and Lebanese American University

Mission and History

LU was founded in the 1950s and 1960s successively, foremost to complement the higher education institutions already existing in Lebanon. It is the only state sponsored institution of mass higher education in Lebanon. In 2011-2012, it enrolled about 38.3% of all university students in Lebanon, i.e. 73,698 students.⁴ Because it requires only symbolic tuition fees, it was the first to provide higher education for Lebanese students from low income families. Among these families, Muslims were overrepresented, which resulted in an increase of Muslims in higher education and public office. The share of women among university students rose, too, as many low and middle income families traditionally give priority to their sons when considering high expenses for education at a private university. Hence, hopes were staked on LU that it would foster integration among Lebanon's citizens in terms of class, sex, confessional and geographical belonging.

In 1977/78, after the outbreak of the civil war in Lebanon, however, twelve of LU's then seventeen faculties were split into two or more branches and were dispersed

over separate regions that were ruled by different warring parties. The measure was intended to enable academic work to continue under the otherwise aggravated conditions resulting from commuting through the country. Simultaneously, it created a system of confessional and political fragmentation that lasts until today. The branches located in East and West Beirut for instance, are mostly populated by Christian and Muslim faculty and students respectively. Moreover, in certain parts of the country, one of the two large political camps, "March 8" or "March 14," clearly dominates local politics, including that of the faculty and student councils in the respective branch.

As for LAU, its precursor institution was a Presbyterian girls college founded by American missionaries in the 1920s. It became co-educational in 1974, and was granted university status by the Lebanese state in 1996. LAU consists of seven schools, entities that parallel the faculties in other universities, and embodies seventeen subject-specific centers and institutes. Its student population numbers 8,000 approximately.

From 2004 on, LAU entered a phase of intensive self-assessment, strategic planning, and expansion. It attained accreditation by the *New England Association of Schools and Colleges* in 2009. Research

was made an integral part of faculty's job profiles, and a de-centralized, participatory, structure of councils and committees is successively being established in order to organize the ever-increasing variety of activities.

Structure of Governance

Decision making at both LU and LAU is based on a collegiate structure of councils, which consist of faculty on every level of academic and administrative work (Lebanese Republic; LAU "Faculty Governance"). At LAU, this structure is complemented by specific bodies for the different realms of self-administration, such as the Curriculum Council, the Admission Council, and the Budget Committee. At LU such services are provided by service units of non-faculty professionals—"bureaucrats"—in the LU's administration. Both universities have a supervisory body of non-employees: the Lebanese government in the case of LU, and a Board of Trustees for LAU, the majority of which must consist of US citizens.

The participatory structure at LU was undermined by the fact that, since the war, responsibilities such as the appointment and promotion of faculty members were shifted from the Faculty and University Councils to the Lebanese government (Nauffal 118; El-Amine and Chaoul 40-41).

Important decisions were postponed over long periods of time, such as the promotion of more than 600 contracted faculty members to full time positions between 2008 and 2014 (Touma). So while only a minority of LU's professors have the chance to impact decision making, at LAU on the other hand, the numerous administrative obligations are even sometimes felt as limiting the capacity to pursue other activities including research.

Moreover, after the withdrawal of the Syrian army in 2005, political representation became more competitive in Lebanon, and the selection of cadres and other important decisions at LU was also subject to political competition between the political parties. (LU Political Science 1 Senior; LU Arts 1 Senior; El-Hage; Haidar; Maatouq; Khoder). While some the LU professors that I interviewed asserted that academic freedom at LU is absolute, others mentioned that fear and distrust among faculty result from divergent political loyalties and can clearly be felt. Furthermore they revealed that there are politically sensitive topics, which the majority of students and teachers attempt to avoid. Fears to utter certain opinions on campus was apparent among LU students in a 2010 study (Rahal). Confrontation between different political student factions became violent at times, though not al-

ways triggered by political controversy ("Lubnān;" "Tajaddud al-ishtibākāt;" Mushallab, "Tajaddud;" "Ishtibāk;" El-Hage). Hence, the LU's administration prohibited political gatherings and advertisement on campus from October 2012 onward (Lebanese University).

Financial Conditions

From 2008 to 2012, LU's total expenditures nearly doubled to become 3,036 USD per student and 223.7 million in total (Nehme; Lebanese University). LAU, by comparison, spent an average of 15,000 USD per student in academic year 2011/12. It can do so because approximately 80% of its budget springs from the tuition fees paid for its students, more than 12,000 USD on average in 2012/13.

Since a nearly 70% increase in salaries in 2012 (Lebanese Republic), full time professors at LU receive a salary that is well-comparable with that of the best paying private universities in the country. With these salaries, the teaching load also increased considerably. Some faculty members stated that it was hardly possible to pursue serious research and fulfill the teaching obligations appropriately, considering that the teaching load now exceeds 300 hours per year for full time faculty. Others were positive that time for research was fairly enough. At both LU and LAU, re-

search is, at least formally, part of the job description of faculty and is a prerequisite for promotion. Unlike LAU, LU does not follow a tenure track procedure. Assistant professors at LU might go on teaching in their position until their retirement, even if they have failed to publish a single article. Many of the SSH academics who teach at LU, pursue their doctoral studies abroad, mainly France. If, back in Lebanon, they continue pursuing research activities, these do not usually contribute to LU's research profile. Instead they are designed, paid for and utilized by non-university institutions. The institutions are traditionally Western or international private institutions, but regional and local proveniences are also becoming increasingly active. They are, however, reluctant to invest in large public universities, whose deep bureaucracies often consume large parts of the invested funds. Lebanon is responding to this problem since 2003 by including SSH in the funding scheme of the *Conseil national de la recherche scientifique*, a public authority which organizes and funds research in Lebanon. Furthermore, three doctoral schools for different groups of disciplines were established at LU in 2007/2008 in order to provide supervision and coordination for research activities. Virtually all of LAU's faculty receive their PhD abroad. At LAU, then, non-tenured

faculty must pursue research next to a teaching load of six weekly hours, and must additionally fulfill further obligations in the faculty's administrative bodies. Recently, the criteria by which their research output is judged for promotion have become very strict (LAU Education Junior 1; LAU Education Senior 2): The publication media are not only required to be peer reviewed, but they are furthermore expected to have a minimum impact factor, evidence again for the preference already given to international periodicals.

Facilities and Services

With its abundant funds, LAU can provide Ivy League university services. Its libraries are equipped, organized and networked according to current standards, making electronic catalogues and databanks and a large collection of books and journals easily accessible to its students and faculty (LAU Education Senior 1; LAU Education Junior 2). Internet access for students and faculty is a matter of course. Libraries at LU, on the other hand, are not yet networked with other libraries, not even with all of those at LU itself. Most of their stocks cannot be found on open shelves, but are only available upon request from the librarians. Borrowing is for graduate students and professors only: In some departments, undergraduate stu-

	LAU		LU	
	undergraduate	graduate	undergraduate	graduate
Hours per term spent in libraries on campus, Ø of responses	40	50	6	8
Hours per term spent reading print media borrowed from libraries on campus, Ø of responses	20	33	5	13
Help from librarian to attain print media from other libraries, % of responses	9.7	9	2.8	6.5
Help from librarian to enter electronic databanks, % of responses	41.9	9	19.4	6.5

Table 1: Use of library services by LAU and LU students.

dents may borrow books during lecture periods. The very first central library for LU is, just now, under construction. Although the responses to our survey about the use of library services were few, 30 at LAU and 116 at LU, they are markedly in line with what the institutions' self-portrayals and their faculty's statements suggested (see Table 1).

Summary LU and LAU

Our sample consists of two very different institutions: At the public mass university, LU, students pay little tuition and are often enrolled for reasons other than studying (LU Arts 1 Senior). Additionally, the bud-

get, the staff, and a myriad of other factors are determined by politicians, and consequently funds and services are not abundant. Here, faculty is left to their own devices much of the time. If permanently employed, they enjoy a rather wide range of decision on how much time and effort they spend for teaching, research, and other activities respectively. At LU "The faculty member is king in the department" as an emeritus from LU put it (El-Amine, Personal interview). Hence, LU is home to a large number of regionally and internationally renowned SSH scholars. And it has enhanced social mobility in Lebanon considerably.

On the other hand, the limited means and facilities constrain this leeway. Both the creation of doctoral schools and the increased investment in research, appear to indicate a change in Lebanon's academic policies. If academic capacity is not retained in full time and tenured positions, however, LU puts its status as a home for intellectual excellence at risk. Furthermore, the comparatively little care and control by the administration leaves doors open for interference from outside institutions. Reports in the media about politicized student skirmishes, and manipulations—even blackmail—in the distribution of staff positions, corroborate the impression that life at LU can be challenging at times. Exposure of certain political positions in the Lebanese public further intensifies those challenges.

At LAU, too, the strong politicization of the Lebanese public sphere impacts student life through occasional violence outbursts between student factions during elections for the student councils (Alabaster). Beyond that, LAU has thus far managed to remain untouched by the press' scandal pages. The necessity to attract financially strong clientele provides a strong incentive to keep party politics off campus. LAU succeeds in doing so with its Board of Trustees and its accreditation agency, which are situated abroad and are little in-

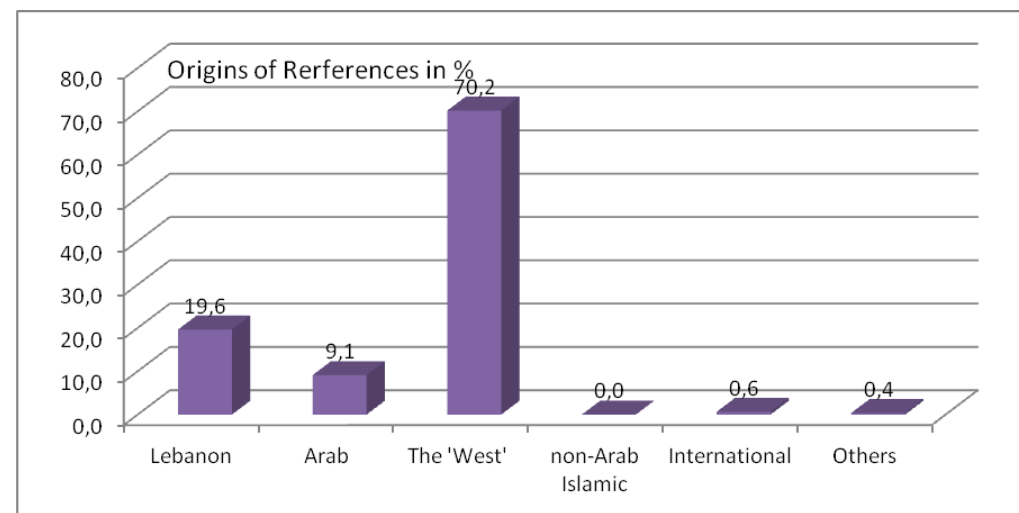


Figure 1: References in dissertations at LU + LAU, in % of all references.

involved with Lebanese politics. Keeping its faculty busy with mandatory research and administrative activities further aids this endeavor. The tenure track mechanism has the potential to retain intellectual capacity, and the comparatively ample financial furnishings allow for a structure of care, support and control, which protects the academic processes from the rough environment of the institution.

Borrowing and Lending as per References in Theses

How are the differences between the two odd neighbors reflected in the writings of their faculty? What scientific communities do they draw from? The figures of refer-

ences shown in the following section are counted from fourteen theses from our two sample universities. Eight are from LU, and six are from LAU.⁵ Seven of the eight theses by LU professors dealt with a local Lebanese topic and one covered a regional Arab topic. One of them was written in English, two in Arabic and the other five in French. Only the two theses written in Arabic were produced at a local university, the others were written in France and England. The six theses written by LAU professors were supervised at universities in the US, the UK, Canada, and Germany.

In general, the results corroborate Hanafi's findings ("The Social Sciences Research"): The majority of the 3,452 references

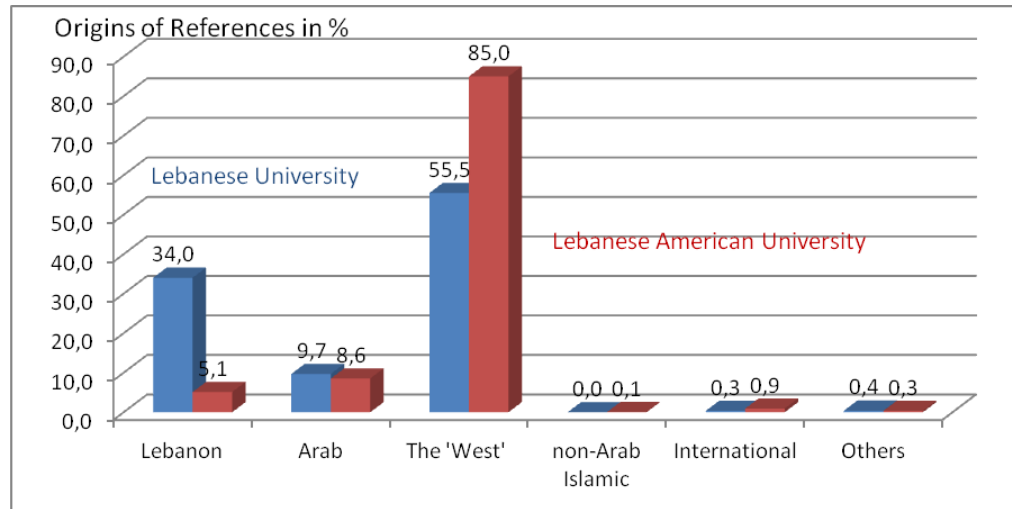


Figure 2: Origins of references in dissertations LU vs. LAU

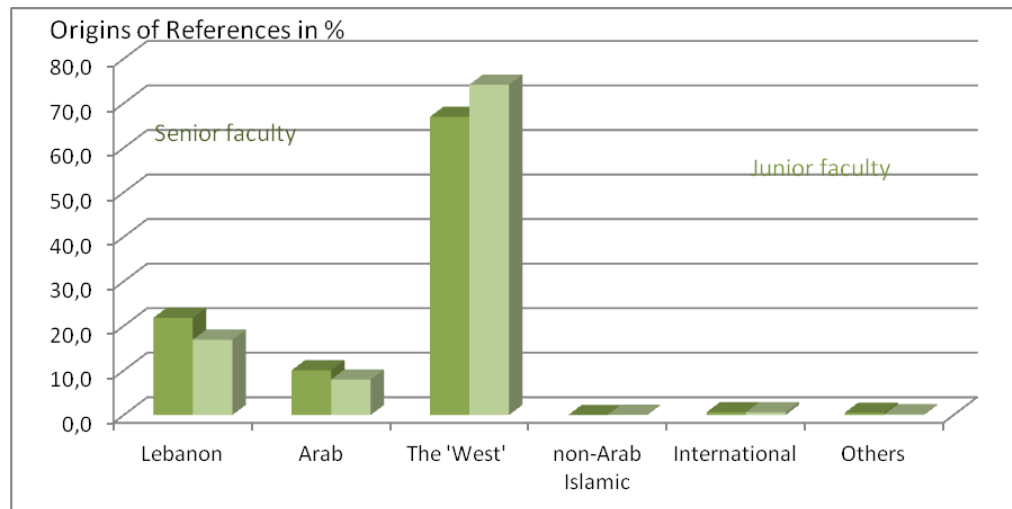


Figure 3: References in dissertations at LU and LAU—before vs. after 2003.

counted, namely 70.2%, were referencing Western literature (figure 1), but there is a striking difference between LU, with only 55.5% references to Western literature, and LAU, with 85% (figure 2).

Researchers who achieved their doctoral degree after 2003, referenced Western literature to a clearly larger extent than their predecessors, who had higher percentages of references to Arab and Lebanese literature (figure 3).

Theses written in Arabic language show a majority of Arabic literature, also in their reception, which makes them indeed look little connected to the international scientific community (figure 4).

Remarkably, theses written in French—at LU—refer with nearly equal frequency to Western literature on the one hand, and local and regional literature on the other. Many of the titles containing French references and that were published in France, were obviously authored by Arabs or Lebanese. The reception patterns in the French language theses resemble that of the Arabic theses more than figure 4 renders visible. The same applies to references to ethnically Arab authors, who publish English language theses in Anglophone countries.

The distribution of references across the range of topics (figure 5)—local, i.e. Lebanese, regional, i.e. Arab, and international—shows a nearly complete absence of local and regional literature from the bibliographies of the theses that cover international topics. It further tells us that there are rather weak ties between Lebanese and Arab research: When dealing with Lebanese topics, authors tend to consult Western more than Arab literature. When writing about Arab topics, in turn, the authors tend to resort to Western rather than Lebanese literature.

When Arab and Lebanese writings are quoted, they seldom belong to the literature by which the theoretical framework or the methodological proceedings are set, but rather are primary sources or secondary literature.

The phenomenon of ethnic Arabs publishing in cities like London, Paris, or New York blurs the boundaries between ‘westernized’ and ‘indigenous’ writings. There are an unknown number of researchers publishing in areas such as North America or Europe, who do not originate from there. Are these people westernized, then? Or are the SSH de-westernizing internationally? Such questions can hardly be tackled by reference counting. Particularly in the Lebanese literature on local and regional

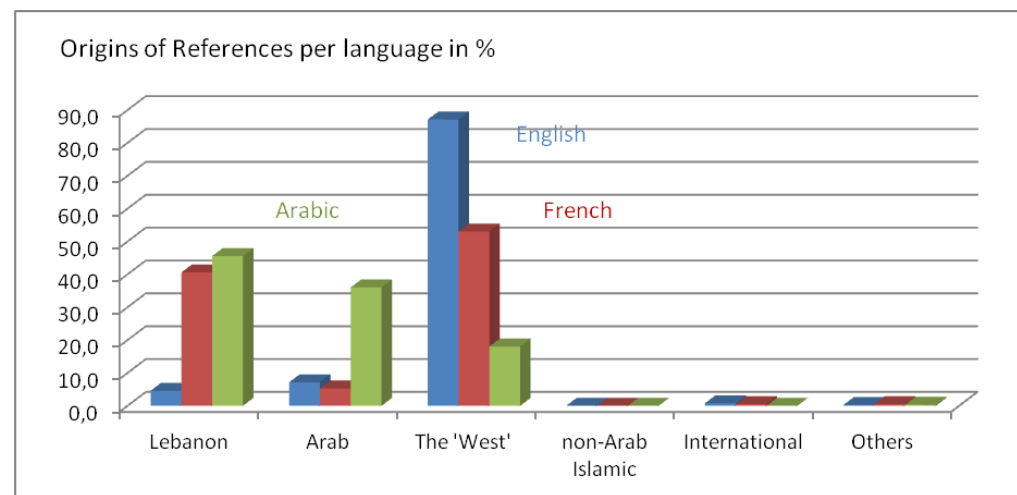


Figure 4: References in theses at LU and LAU according to their language.

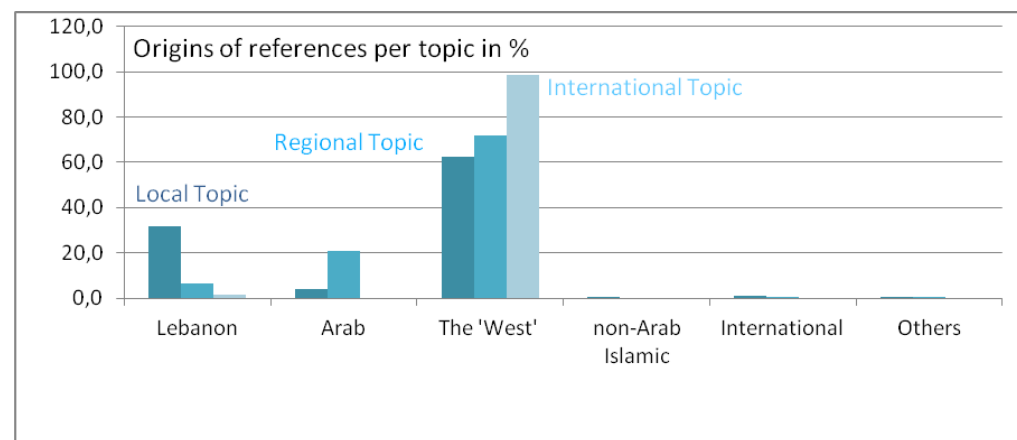


Figure 5: References in theses at LU and LAU per topic.

topics, references to ethnically Lebanese scholars who publish in the francophone, West, are abundant. Conversely, the highly self-referential Lebanese research literature in French indicates a completely different pattern of attachment: These

authors correspond largely with other Lebanese and Arab authors who work and study in France. They are highly related to a Western—the francophone—academic context, but some seldom refer to other international research literature. Is this a Lebanese or a francophone phenomenon? In evaluating connectivity versus isolation and Western versus indigenous research-orientation, literature can only be vaguely quantified. It is then surely no less difficult to contextualize or value them. Two points should be considered: First, looking at such figures we should ask: Compared to what? According to prominent data banks and citation indices, the share of non-Western researchers in the sphere of internationally visible so-called hard sciences (medicine, natural sciences, technology) has increased considerably over the last decades.⁶ Among SSH articles, on the other hand, the share of North American and European production remained constantly high throughout 1988 to 2007 and covered around 90% of the global output of articles in leading journals. During this period, non-Western authors increasingly quoted Western publications, from 77% of their citations in the middle of the 1990s to 88% in around 2004. This increase occurred at the cost of references to publications authored in

their own region or country. Western authors, in turn, increased their reception of non-Western research literature (Gringas and Mosbah-Natanson). Considering this, the distribution of references to English language publications at LAU does not appear overly westernized. If we further take into account that the share of Arab SSH researchers in internationally visible genres is particularly scarce, albeit growing (Arab Thought Foundation 43-61), the quoting habits of LAU's faculty seem predictable for the local academics who participate in the international academic community.

Secondly, the predominant orientation of academics writing in Arabic towards Arabic research literature is, in part, an expression of the isolation that results from a lack of technical capacity. However, it also expresses a division of labor: Here, the national universities, who explain the local societies to themselves versus, there, the universities run by foreign providers that explain local and regional issues to the world and who additionally process international knowledge for use in local contexts.

Networking Initiatives⁷

The lack of unity in the SSH concerning their basic assumptions, their different

fields of research, and between national and international scientific communities is a worldwide phenomenon (Bertenthal) and not particular to Arab societies. If only there was not the observation, which is shared by many Arab academics, that the two groups seldom read each other's papers. To tackle this problem, some Arab academics have started initiatives for regional coherence. A few examples will be introduced in this section. Two of them are associations of scholars, and the others are databanks, which record research literature that is written in the Arabic language and/or is pertaining to Arab topics.

Arab Scholarly Associations

The *Arab Council of the Social Sciences* (ACSS) was inaugurated in 2013. Funding is provided by a mix of institutions, beginning with the Swedish government in 2005. The background was the consideration that the SSH tend to address local and regional particularities more than natural sciences and technology do. Thus, in addition to international cooperation, they also require regional cooperation, especially in the Arab world with its large space of a shared language.

Another problem of SSH in Arab countries that the ACSS intends to address is a generational one: Well established 'five stars

professors' hold a discursive monopoly at universities and other institutions because of a general ignorance of the work of younger researchers. Hence, for decades, the Arab SSH did not rejuvenate themselves properly. Consequently, the ACSS' inaugural conference featured a majority of young researchers as participants.

An older and smaller initiative is the *Lebanese Association for Educational Studies* (LAES) founded in 1995. Its sole purpose is to produce and disseminate knowledge about education. To that end, it issues reports, publishes a books series, and convenes conferences. Membership is restricted to educationalists from Lebanon and a maximum of 20% from other Arab states. LAES members have very different political, philosophical, social, and ideological backgrounds. Scholars from LU and a variety of other universities are members and share projects and conferences. Part of LAES' studies in the past were conducted by an initiative of its own members, and other studies were conducted following demands by external bodies. The Lebanese Ministry of Education, for instance, sponsored studies about the national school curriculum (2005), in efforts to develop an educational strategy for Lebanon (2007), and also commissioned a drafted law for a national quality

assurance commission for higher education. Some of LAES's works were highly controversial, such as a study about the problems and demands of the Lebanese University at the end of the 1990s (El-Amine and Chaoul). LAES provides an open access guide to the universities of all Arab countries on its homepage, which for example, ALECSO or the *Union of Arab Universities* never provided despite their much longer existence. The largest share in the funding for LAES' projects is provided by the *Ford Foundation*. Additional funds originate from various other American, European and Arab institutions.

Arab Databanks

In 2005, members of LAES had the idea for a database that would specialize in educational research literature. It was born out of the observation that educationalists in Lebanon did not take notice of their peers' work from neighboring universities, let alone from other Arab countries. *Shamaa*, the acronym for *shabakat al-ma'lumat al-'arabiyya al-tarbawiyya*, ("Arab Educational Information Network") enables researchers to establish, for the first time, a comprehensive state of the art for any given educational topic, which concerns the Arab world when delimiting their field of research. More than 20,000

studies are documented with an abstract in *Shamaa*, 5,000 with their full text. *Shamaa* concluded contracts with a number of Arab universities to grant access to their postgraduate theses. It holds another contract with the international educational database ERIC, which provides it with all titles that cover educational topics in the Arab world. Although *Shamaa* was modeled on ERIC, it works under different conditions: It is funded by private donors, such as the *Ford Foundation* and other large international and Arab funding agencies. These are generous, but do not compare to the financial capacity of the US federal government, which funds ERIC and other grand databases.

Similar to the scholars of LAES, two individuals, Mohamad al-Baghdadi and Abd ar-Rahman Shahbandar, considered the absence of something that parallels *JSTOR*, *Web of Science* or *Scopus* for Arabic publications a major deficiency. To fill this void, they founded the databases *E-Marefa* and *Almanhal* respectively. Again, these databases are run by private initiatives and with private funds, not by a publicly funded institution.

Conclusions

The seclusion between regionally and internationally oriented research by Arab

social scientists diagnosed by Hanafi (“Les Systèmes universitaires”) is obviously valid in the case of the two universities studied here. The same procedure that Hanafi followed has rendered a similar result in our own study. However, to view the dichotomy as an utterance of constraints in academic freedom or as a result of a lack of opportunities, as Hanafi, Kabbanji and peers do, is only one interpretation of the facts. With regard to the SSH, the categories ‘international’ and ‘Western’ overlap to an extent that makes them nearly identical. People and institutions in Europe and North America still produce the bulge of SSH literature. For researchers at an American or international university in Lebanon, or in any part of the world, to refer to this output is natural or even indispensable. Conversely, the rate of reference to Western authors in literature written in Arabic would not automatically increase with enhanced research opportunities at Arab national institutions. Furthermore, the predominance of references to Western literature in Arabic research literature, when regarding their theoretical and methodological design, does not necessarily indicate a lack of intellectual independence. Since concepts as basic as society or economy, mass education or parliament, as well as the bulge of their critiques and variations

spring from modern Western thought, serious SSH discourse will build on these pillars for the foreseeable future wherever it may be produced.

Regional, international, and even local connectivity is, however, an issue that deserves attention. If something like an ‘Arab world’ exists, the perception of each others’ work among SSH academics from neighboring institutions and countries must be of benefit in the search for generalizations, and in the creation of new hypotheses and theories. It seems obvious that LU, and many of the public universities in neighboring countries, lack the means for such connectivity; a few reasons for which I touched upon in this article. Their common denominator is neglect out of dysfunctional political processes. But, yes, an Arab SSH community does exist. Top academics participate in it and benefit from it, mostly not at their own universities, but in networks, associations, and research centers. The initiators of these networks, which I introduced in section 3, stopped looking to their governments and IGO’s. With diversified funding, they succeed in providing easily accessible, independent structures. These have the potential to promote the inclusion of younger scholars and to flatten hierarchies among the Arab SSH community, a development that is so dearly

needed when one considers the high quantity of students and graduates from these disciplines.

Will Arab mass universities benefit from networking, or will they become detached from this development and thereby increase their isolation and lessen their significance? Will more Arab academics pursue their postgraduate studies and other research projects at local universities in their home countries? Will this happen in the near future with standards that connect them to their regional and international scientific communities? In order for public institutions to enhance their connectivity locally, regionally and internationally, the following strategies are worth considering:

1. Orientation towards international quality standards, as long as these are reasonable, in order to become more selective and overcome the crowdedness and arbitrariness that is typical for mass universities, would make them more compatible for cooperation. As was observed in Lebanon by Kabbanji, the adherence to standardized quality criteria does not necessarily result in a standardization of academic profiles. Quite the opposite, it can be conducive to a differentiation in profiles between competing institutions (“Heurs et malheurs”). The Lebanese initiative to create national standards, and a na-

Jonathan Kriener

Is research fellow at the Department for Oriental and Islamic Studies of the Ruhr University of Bochum. He has been a research fellow at the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research and at the Orient Institute Beirut, and taught courses about the 20th century histories of Lebanon, Israel, and the Palestinians, as well as recent Arab educational thought and reform at the Ruhr University and Tübingen University. His publications deal comparatively with history, civics, and religious instruction at Lebanese, Palestinian and Israeli schools, and higher education in Egypt and Lebanon. **email:** jonathan.kriener@ruhr.uni-bochum.de

tional authority to that end, is somewhat promising, although it is stagnant and many questions remain unanswered (Bashshur 129-43). With regard to quality, it makes sense to enhance the support for, and control of, faculty and students at LU. Here, they are often left to their own devices, and they lack information about crucial elements such as scholarship programs, research budgets and external funding sources. Furthermore they are liable to interferences from political or sectarian sources.

2. In order to achieve a substantial improvement in services such as counseling and in-service training for academics at

public universities, public budget is far from enough and will remain so in the foreseeable future. Tuition fees could be potentially helpful. Moderate tuition fees combined with a well-furnished scholarship program for talented but needy students would not necessarily have to result in inequality.

While the number of university students in Arab countries has multiplied massively during the last decades, vocational and technical professions tend to be understaffed. The national universities have achieved goals such as social mobility and the integration of women into higher education. Research and networking, howev-

er, have not kept pace with this development, as the micro-data in this study confirm. The SSH are extremely affected by this development. They suffer from an image as “disciplines for under-achievers and for girls” (El-Amine 2009). Furthermore, the numbers and merits of their graduates do by no means correspond with the demands of their local societies, and their research profile is uninviting. It is now time for them to become more selective. An enhanced focus on quality and connectivity should also mitigate the frequency of interferences motivated by political and parochial interests.

Notes

¹ Data in this article were gathered in 2012 and 2013 from legal and statistical literature, faculty interviews, doctoral theses, and student surveys, in the frame of the research project “Local, Regional, and International ‘Borrowing and Lending’ in Social Sciences at Egyptian and Lebanese Universities.” It was funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, coordinated at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, and received scientific and

administrative support by the *Orient-Institut Beirut*.
² E.g. Galal; Lamine; Maktoum Foundation; UNDP; Yearly by the *Arab Thought Foundation*.

³ Already in the 1980s a debate about the SSH in their domestic academia went on among Arab and Muslim academics, see Lange, Edipoğlu. As these debates are strictly normative, though, I restrict myself to two tracks of the recent, more empirical debate.

⁴ Statistics of the Lebanese *Centre de Recherche et de Développement Pédagogique*, 2011-2012.
⁵ References were categorized according to the location of their publishing institution, even if its providers stem from a different country or cultural background. E.g. publications by the *Center for Arab Unity Studies* and the *Institut français du Proche-Orient*, both in Beirut, were categorized as Lebanese,

although their providers are Arab and French. Articles in the *Arab Studies Quarterly* were categorized as American, although their providers and most of their authors are ethnic Arabs. All references to Arabic language publications, however, were counted as Arab, even if published in e.g. London or Paris because they address an Arab audience. Translations were categorized according to the author of the original.

⁶ Between 2002 and 2008, the share of North America and the European Union in global research output decreased from 73.8 to 67.6%, that of the OECD from 84 to 76.4%. Countries classified as ‘developing’ increased their share from 21 to 32% (UNESCO, 10).

→

→ ⁷ Where not notified otherwise, this section summarizes a session on the workshop "Social Sciences at Arab Universities: Opportunities and Constraints," held at the *Orient-Institut Beirut* on 28 February 2014. It was mainly covered by Adnan El-Amine and Sari Hanafi.

Works Cited

Alabaster, Olivia. "Leaders Must Invest in the Youth: LAU President." *dailystar.com.lb*. The Daily Star Lebanon, 19 Dec. 2011. Web. 14 Apr. 2015.

Arab Thought Foundation. *Al-Taqrīr al-'arabī al-thālith li-l-tanmiya al-thaqāfiyya*. Beirut: Arab Thought Forum, 2010. Web. 14 Apr. 2015. <<http://arabthought.org/sites/default/files/report3.pdf>>.

Badawi, Ahmed M. *Al-Ab'ād al-ijtimā'iyya li-intāḡ w-iktisāb al-ma'rifa. Ḥālat 'ilm al-ijtimā' fī-l-jāmi'āt al-miṣriyya*. Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies, 2009. Print. Doctoral Theses Series 76.

Bashshur, Mounir. "Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the Arab States: An Overview." *Quality Assurance in Arab Universities*. Ed. Adnan El-Amine. Beirut: Lebanese Association for Educational Studies, 2005. 113-82. Print. Yearbook of the LAES 5.

Bertenthal, Bennett I. "Challenges and Opportunities for the Social and Behavioral Sciences." *The Social Sciences at a Turning Point?* Ed. OECD. N.p.: OECD Publishing, 1999. 137-41. Print.

Edipoğlu, Kerim. "Islamisierung der Soziologie oder Soziologisierung des Islam? Indigenisierungsansätze in Malaysia, Iran und der arabischen Welt." Diss. Eberhard Karls Universität, 2006. Print.

El-Amine, Adnan. Personal interview. 21 June 2012. Beirut.

El-Amine, Adnan, and Melhem Chaoul. *Qaḍāyā al-jāmi'a al-lubnāniyya wa-iṣlāḡuhā*. Beirut: Dar al-Nahar, 1999. Print.

El-Hage, Anne-Marie. "L'Université libanaise, une institution en déclin, minée par le professionnalisme politique et le clientélisme." *lorientlejour.com*. L'Orient-Le Jour, 8 Oct. 2012. Web. 16 Mar. 2013.

Galal, Ahmed. *The Road Not Traveled: Education Reform in the Middle East and North Africa*. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2008. Web. 10 Apr. 2015.

Gringas, Yves, and Sébastien Mosbah-Natanson. "Where Are Social Sciences Produced?" *World Social Science Report: Knowledge Divides*. UNESCO and International Social Science Council (ISSC). Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2010. 149-53. Web. 10 Apr. 2015.

Haidar, Ibrahim. "Muwazzaf kahrabā' 'uyyina fi milāk al-lubnāniyya qabla ayyām 'alā taqā' udihi. Majlis al-wazarā' aṣḡara al-marsūm wa-yahjub al-tafarrugh 'an al-mi'āt." *annahar.com*. An-Nahar, 7 Mar. 2013. Web. 18 Mar. 2013.

Ḥanafi, Ḥasan, and 'Abd-Allah Balqaziz, eds. *Al-Ma'rifi wa-'l-idiyulūji fi 'l-fikr al-'arabī al-mu'āṣir: Buḡūth wa-munāqashāt an-nadwa al-fikriyya allatī naẓzamahā markaz dirāsāt al-waḡda al-'arabiyya*. Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies, 2010. Print.

Hanafi, Sari. *Donor Community and the Market of Research Production: Framing and De-framing the Social Sciences*. Beirut: American University of Beirut, 2009. Print.

---. "The Social Sciences Research in the Arab East: Dilemmas of the Research Centers outside of the University." *Towards an Arab Higher Education Space*. 547-62. Print.

---. "Les Systèmes universitaires au Moyen-Orient arabe." *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 131.1 (2012): 23-44. Web. 10 Apr. 2015.

Kabbanji, Jacques E. "Internationalization of the Social Sciences: The Lebanese Experience in Higher Education and Research." *Internationalization of the Social Sciences: Asia - Latin America - Middle East - Africa - Eurasia*. Ed. Michael Kuhn and Doris Weidemann. Bielefeld: Transcript, 2010. 213-36. Print. Science Studies.

→

- ---. "Heurs et malheurs du système universitaire libanais: À l'heure de l'homogénéisation et de la marchandisation de l'enseignement supérieur." *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 131.1 (2012): 127-45. Web. 10 Apr. 2015.
- Kawtharani, Wajih. "Al-Īdiyūlūjī wa-l-ma'rifī fi-l-khiṭāb al-tārīkhī al-'arabī." *Al-Ma'rifī wa-'l-īdiyūlūjī fi-l-khiṭāb al-'arabī al-mu'āšir*. 191-223. Print.
- Khoder, Patricia. "Menacée et agressée, une secrétaire générale de l'UL démissionne, mais les étudiants la soutiennent." *L'Orient-Le Jour*, 11 Dec. 2010. Web.
- Lamine, Bechir, ed. *Towards an Arab Higher Education Space: International Challenges and Societal Responsibilities*. Proc. of the Arab Regional Conference on Higher Education, 1 May to 2 June 2010. Beirut: UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States, 2010. Web. 10 Apr. 2015.
- Lange, Katharina. *Zurückholen, was uns gehört: Indigenisierungstendenzen in der arabischen Ethnologie*. Münster: Transcript, 2005. Print.
- Lebanese American University (LAU). "Faculty Governance." *lau.edu.lb*. 11 Apr. 2007. Web. 5 Apr. 2013.
- LAU Education Junior 1. Personal interview. 28 Nov. 2012. Beirut.
- LAU Education Junior 2. Personal interview. 12 Apr. 2013. Beirut.
- LAU Education Senior 1. Personal interview. 8 Apr. 2013. Beirut.
- LAU Education Senior A. Personal interview. 2 Apr. 2013. Beirut.
- Lebanese Republic. Law 206: Change of the order of salaries of individual faculty at the Lebanese University and of the alimentation of its retired personnel. *Al-Jarīda al-rasmiyya* 664. 8 Mar. 2012.
- . Council of Ministers. "Qānūn raqm 66: Tanzīm al-majālīs al-akādīmiyya fi-l-jāmi'a al-lubnāniyya. Ta'dīl ba'ḍ aḥkām al-qānūn raqm 75 tāriḥ 26/12/1967." *Al-Jarīda al-rasmiyya*, 4 Mar. 2009.
- Lebanese University (LU). "Mudhakkirat idāra raqm 12." 19 Oct. 2012.
- LU Arts 1 Senior. Personal interview. 17 Feb. 2011.
- LU Political Science 1 Senior. Personal interview. 27 Nov. 2012.
- "Lubnān: 5 jurhā fi ishtibākāt bayna ṭullāb 'amal' wa-'ḥizb allāh!" *aawsat.com*. Al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ, 1 Feb. 2001. Web. 2 July 2013.
- Maatouq, Frederique. "Binā' al-jāmi'a al-waṭaniyya fi dawla għayr waṭaniyya." *annahar.com*. An-Nahar, 30 Apr. 2013. Web. 2 May 2013.
- Maktoum Foundation. *Arab Knowledge Report: Towards Productive Intercommunication for Knowledge*. Dubai: Ghurair, 2009.
- Mushallab, Maya. "Tajaddud ishtibākāt fi kulliyāt al-jāmi'a al-lubnāniyya wa-ṭullāb al-taqaddumī al-ishtirākī wa-tayyār al-mustaqbal yatawaqqafūna 'an al-ḥudūr. Ri'āsat al-jāmi'a tuhaddid bi-aqṣā tadābīr li-man' taḥawwulāhā makānan li-l-ṣirā' wa-l-fitna." *aawsat.com*. Al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ, 9 Dec. 2006. Web. 2 Apr. 2015.
- . "Ishtibāk bayna 'amal' wa-'ḥizb allāh' fi-l-jāmi'a al-lubnāniyya: Taḥawwur ilā iḍrām al-nirān fi ḥaram kulliyat al-ḥuqūq: 'Alā khalfiyat al-taḥḍīr li-mahrejān fi dhikrā ighṭiyāl mugħniya." *aawsat.com*. Al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ, 13 Feb. 2009. Web. 2 Apr. 2015.
- Nasser, Ramzi N., and Kamal Abouché. "The Academic 'Patras' of the Arab World: Creating a Climate of Academic Apartheid." *PORTAL: Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies* 4.1 (2007). Web. 17 May 2011.
- Nauffal, Diane I. "Higher Education in Lebanon: Management Cultures and Their Impact on Performance Outcomes." PhD thesis. University of Birmingham, 2004. Print.
- Nehme, Denise (LU, General Secretary, Department of Statistics). Message to the author. 24 May 2013. E-mail.
- . Message to the author. 5 June 2013. E-mail.
- Rahal, Moadad. "The Lebanese University and the Issue of Social Integration: An Analytical Survey Study." *Towards an Arab Higher Education Space*. 657-77.
- Salamé, Ramzi. "Career Path of Higher Education Teaching Personnel in the Arab States and the Quality Challenges." *Towards an Arab Higher Education Space*. 319-46.
- al-Sayyid, Riḍwān. "Al-Ma'rifī wa-l-īdiyūlūjī fi taḥqīqāt al-turāth al-'arabī wa-qirā'ātihi." *Al-Mustaqbal al-'arabī* 381 (2010): 104-28. Web.
- "Tajaddud ishtibākāt bayna 'amal' wa-'al-taqaddumī 'alā khalfiyat intikhābāt al-jāmi'a al-lubnāniyya." *aawsat.com*. Al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ, 19 Apr. 2002. Web. 2 July 2013.
-

→ Touma, Jean. "Ba'd istiḳālat al-ḥukūma: Al-jāmi'a al-lubnāniyya ilā ayn?" *annahar.com*. An-Nahar, 3 Apr. 2013. Web.

UNESCO. *UNESCO Science Report 2010*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2010. Web. 15 Apr. 2015.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Arab Human Development Report 2003: Building a Knowledge Society*. New York: United Nations Publications, 2003. Web. 10 Apr. 2015.

Yassin, al-Sayyid. "Al-Ta'lif al-sūsyūlūjī al-'arabī: Muntalaqātuḥu wa-marāḥiluhu w-ittijāhātuḥu wa-mushkilātuḥu wa-āfāq taṭawwurihi wa-taṭwirihi." *Al-Ma'rif wa-'l-īdiyūjī fi-l-khiṭāb al-'arabī al-mu'āšir*. 85-113.