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CHAPTER 3

THE STATE OF ARAB SOCIOLOGY AS SEEN BY AN ARAB SOCIOLOGIST

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This study tries to present the views and concerns of a sociologist from the Arab World by reconstructing his experiences in the field of sociology in the last two decades. The study will review the evolution of sociological thought and writings in institutions of higher learning and research in the Arab world and it will discuss the impact and extent of the influence of Western sociological and anthropological writings on Arab sociology in general. Also, the study understanding sociology.

This review is experiences of debatable, but reality (1) find out the extent to which sociology helps in the Arab world and to consider the hoped future of Arab colored by the biographical, political and cultural of the author. Therefore, the views presented, may be it is hoped, reflective at least in part, of my experiences with sociology started only during my graduate studies in the U.S., as my undergraduate studies were in Mathematics and Physics. (2) Therefore, my early exposure and readings in the social sciences were basically in American and European sociological and anthropological literature. (3) I did not have any sound knowledge of Arabic sociological literature until I returned home from my graduate studies. During my graduate studies, whatever I read on Arab society and culture was in English.

I expected that my educational experience, sound in Western sociological thought, would enable me to teach sociology in Saudi Arabia with ease. But since I had to teach in Arabic, and I did not even know the Arabic equivalents of most sociological terms, I found that I had a lot to catch up. Also, the situation meant that I had to read what was available in Arabic, relearn the scope and limits of being a sociologist, what texts to teach and to what theories, concepts and ideas students were supposed to be exposed. Unfortunately, only texts in Arabic could be used, since the students knew only Arabic. It was very difficult, if not impossible, for most of them to read anything not in Arabic.

Sociological Textbooks

When I started teaching, I was forced to decide what would constitute sociological texts to be presented to students. Did I have to consider as

sociological knowledge only the writings of modern sociologists? Was I restricted to what was available only in Arabic?

The choices of textbooks were most of the time very limited, and most of the existing textbooks were either translations or rephrasing of American or British textbooks and mostly old ones. If I were not satisfied with those texts, the alternative was to write one's own textbooks. That was and still is a very difficult task. I wondered about the possibility of using classical Arabic writings on social and cultural issues written by social historians, jurists, philosophers and classicists, as a source for Arabic social thought. However, I found it was difficult for students to relate to those texts.

It soon became clear to me that answers to these questions could not be handled individually and at the same time sociology to become a relevant and meaningful field of study got to present some information on Arab society and culture. For the Arab students to enjoy and learn sociology, the texts they study should not present examples illustrations and cases from western societies. Many students told me that it was very difficult for them to relate to most of what they studied in sociology courses. They felt that what they studied was an alien social reality to which they could not relate. This made sociology for them less meaningful, with no strong relation to their own society and culture. Also, the language used in those texts tended to be abstract and somewhat unclear. It was not only the jargon, but also describing of concepts and ideas that were not comprehensible to the students. Unfortunately, the texts available did not take great care to clarify and make the material accessible to students. (5) Though sociology as an academic discipline has a long history in the Arab world, as we will soon illustrate, it still has a long way to go before it can be internalized within the intellectual and cultural corpus of Arab thought. (6)

Histories of Sociologists in the Arab World

Sociology as a field of academic study has different histories in the Arab world. We mean here that sociology as an academic field of study was established under and for different reasons in Arab countries. As we will show, in some, it was the result of the natural progression of university educational needs, in others it was established for colonial administrative purposes; and in yet others it was established as a result of having new universities. We will present very briefly the history of sociology in Egypt, North Africa, Sudan and the Arabian Gulf States. Modern social thoughts were introduced into some Arab countries, e.g. Egypt, during the late 19th century. Some Egyptians earned their Ph.D's in sociology from France in 1913 and 1918. (7) Courses of sociology were offered since 1914 at the university level in Egypt. By 1925, a Department of Sociology was founded at the University of Cairo. Most of the founding sociologists were French educated, very much influenced by the Durkheimian school, some of them supervised directly by Durkheim. During this period, sociological writings

tended to be abstract, theoretical, and philosophical in nature. The themes chosen tended to be very general and were treated rather uncritically. (8)

By the early 1950s, many Egyptian students studied in British and American universities. Hassan Al-Saati was one of the first students to graduate from a British University and got trained in using social survey methods. Therefore, he was able to introduce empirical studies into Egyptian universities, and later played an important role in establishing the National Research Centre for Sociological and Crime Studies in Cairo. (9)

Though this empirical trend produced many studies dealing with social problems and disorder, most did not present a coherent and developed theoretical perspective to explain the data collected. Most of the research took the shape of a sample-survey that did not lead to a general theory. Also, as it was with the Durkheimian writings, it was descriptive rather than critical of the status quo. (10)

In Alexandria, Radcliffe-Brown established anthropological studies in the 1940s. He trained some Egyptian students who carried on the tradition of the structural functionalist school, many of whom studied new desert settlements. That tradition is still actively led by Abou Zaid, but they too did not cause a significant theoretical advancement. Most of the studies carried out did repeat almost the same types of studies. (11)

When the Egyptian revolution took place, it tried to make use of the social sciences to reconstruct society. Also, the numbers of departments and students expanded, because of the democratization of education. These factors and others led to increased rates of admissions in universities, with a large number of students joining Departments of Sociology. Graduate programmes were established to respond to the increasing number of students.

Since the 1970s and 1980s many Egyptian professors were seconded to teach in the newly established universities in most Arab states, especially in the Gulf states and Yemen. Those professors brought with them their textbooks and vision of the study of sociology. Those professors, no doubt, influenced and are still influencing the nature of sociological curriculum and teaching methods. What constitutes the Egyptian sociological experience became a model for most sociologists working in these universities. Perhaps it is necessary to mention here that some Egyptian sociologists adopted Marxist perspectives in their writings. However, this perspective did not flourish inside the universities as it did in some other Arab universities. Most Marxist sociological writings were outside university publications and courses. This is not to say that leftist trends were not visible. (12)

In Iraq, sociology was established in the early 1960s. Some of the founding fathers, for example Wardi, did contribute to Arab sociological theory. He skilfully used historical sociology capitalizing on Iraqi history, to build his theory. The influence of American sociology in the beginning was very clear; later, leftist /

Marxist influence became more prominent in the works of many Iraqi sociologists.(13)

In Sudan, anthropological research started very early with the works of Evans-Prichard on southern Sudan. The University of Khartoum later was able to attract several British anthropologists who did their fieldwork in the Sudan and many taught at the university. This tradition continued either by carrying out independent research by Sudanese professors or by joining and collaborating with European and American researchers. Since the language of instruction at the university was English, the students had easy access to Western literature and were not limited to Arabic textbooks. However, since the 1970s, several universities were using Arabic as the language of instruction and Arabic sociological textbooks. Thus, we witness in those universities the same sociological trends we found in other Arab universities.

In North Africa, anthropological and sociological research was under colonial administration and was not attached to mainstream French academic schools. This literature was most rejected and criticized by North Africans and liberal French sociologists for being "colonial" and "unacademic". After independence, Marxist writings became very popular in universities; however, they tended to be ideological and political in nature. Very few studies have used fieldwork. (14)

In the Gulf Arab States, Sociology Departments were founded in the 1970s, becoming very popular among the students. It is very difficult to explain this trend, but it contributed directly to increased numbers of students whose academic abilities were not high. The Egyptian influence is very clear in textbooks and research. However, since many students have done their studies in America and the U.K. and have returned, their influence will probably shape the nature and direction of sociology at these universities. Perhaps connected with the Islamic resurgence, many sociologists started advancing the idea that sociology as it stands is Western in nature and might not be suitable for non-western societies and cultures. In addition Western sociological theories are actually adverse to non-Western societies. Therefore they must be replaced by an Islamized version of sociology. We have in fact witnessed an increasing trend in calls for the Islamization of the social sciences. Some Saudi Universities are considered leading in this endeavour, but this is not by any means limited to them. (15)

It should be clear from the above "histories" that sociology and anthropology in Arab countries were imported, as it was the case for most of the other scientific fields, from Western universities. The Egyptian experience was the oldest and most influential in the rest of the Arab world. It should be clear that sociological writings are still considered external to, and not fully integrated into the general intellectual life in the Arab world.

Anthropological and Sociological Studies by Non-Arab Scholars

The Arab world as an area-study has been the subject of studies by many American and European social scientists (Fernea & Malarkey, 1975, Eric Cohen 1977, Sabagh and Ghazalla 1986, Abu Lughod, et al. 1988). These anthropological and sociological studies have been increasing in volume and importance. Many of these studies are considered exemplary in the field, and are influencing it at both the theoretical and methodological levels. However, it is surprising how almost unknown this tradition is in most Arab sociological circles. Some of these studies are extremely critical of the Arab world, and most are neither mentioned nor studied in courses of sociology in Arab textbooks. Some have even told me that they consider such literature irrelevant to their field of study. (16)

The lack of critical study and interaction with this literature in Arab universities, except for the few who worked with colleagues in the West, such as what Talal Asad (1980) and others have done, means that Arab sociology is not making serious use of this expanding literature. (17)

It is important to note that this anthropological literature on Arab communities and cities is using new methodological and theoretical perspectives that are considered very important in advancing this field. Arab sociologists could have learned and contributed to this debate, since many of the studies were carried out in their world. It seems to me that there are reasons for not using or even being aware of this literature. Among the major reasons is the lack of command of English. Secondly, many Arab sociologists, especially those trained only in Arab universities, do limit themselves to Arabic texts and do not have continuous access to professional journals and books published abroad. Thirdly, many Arab sociologists do not consider anthropological studies as part of their field. Many consider textbooks to be their major source for sociological knowledge, so they neglect ethnographies and descriptive community studies. Perhaps if these were introduced and studied critically by Arab students in universities, sociology could become a more relevant and interesting field of study. Also, it seems that it is about time to stress the urgency for the need of interaction and better communications among those who study sociologically the Arab world, whether they are from the Arab world or outside. Such interactions and communication seem to be necessary to ensure better and mutual understanding and in the process will help to produce better sociological literature!

Sociology in Arab Intellectual Circles

Perhaps, it could be said that sociological writings are limited for teaching and promotion purposes in most of the Arab world. There is not yet an independent professional sociological journal in the Arab world. There are annual faculty journals publishing sociology articles side by side with Arabic literature, history,

geography, etc. The circulation of these "journals" is usually limited to university faculty members. The lack of professional journals and societies, the Arab Sociological Association is exceptional, has meant the lack of serious interaction and communication among Arab sociologists themselves. Sometimes they do not even know the research interests of one another, which would often lead to duplication of efforts.

We cannot talk about a widespread sociological discourse or school in the Arab world, though the Arab world is busily involved with several intellectual and philosophical discourses that have gained great command over broad audiences. The writings of intellectual figures such as Hassan Hanfi, Abdullah Laroui, Muhammed Al-Jabri and many others represent this phenomenon. Their writings have a wide readership, their ideas, theses are discussed, criticized, and quoted all over Arabic intellectual circles. Several critical works were written on many of them. We do not witness such interactions towards sociological writings. Only the writings of Wardi (1992) and Bennabi (1969) had such reception. (18)

To illustrate, I will mention two examples. A. Messeri (1988) published, in a monthly popular book series, an important sociological study of the ideology of Zionism from the perspective of the sociology of knowledge. Though the subject matter is extremely important and relevant, the book was not widely referred to in sociological writings and did not find its way towards sociology classrooms!

Another work is Halim Barkat's (1991), "Contemporary Arab Society". Although it was published by a leading Arab publisher, and the text was written for a general readership and may be used as a textbook for sociology courses, it did not become a well known book in general intellectual circles. Barkat presented very provocative ideas and concepts in his book, but they passed unquestioned and undebated. Some of the issues raised by him, when presented by the popular writers, became subject for debates.

From these two examples, we could say generally that sociological discourse is not yet considered an interesting one. We wonder whether such disinterest is limited only to some major sociological books and not to sociological issues. To find out, I looked at studies covering "political Islam" which is considered a very important and current issue in the Arab world. There were many books and articles on the subject written in Arabic, but counting the studies that use sociological analysis and methods shows that there are not many such studies. Actually, when we compare the volume of studies on this phenomenon in English with what is being published in Arabic, we will conclude that much work is needed. Most of what is written in Arabic are expressions of opinions rather than results of field research. Most of the studies published do not try to find out the social and cultural factors that led to the appearance of this phenomenon. That is to say, we encounter neither descriptive studies nor theoretical analysis. We find such efforts in some Western studies, which tried to build some theoretical models to explain this phenomenon using Weberian or Marxist concepts. (19)

Sociological writings, unfortunately, are thought to be limited to social problems in some intellectual circles. So it is expected that sociologists will write essentially only on family issues, immigration, drug addiction, and questions of development, etc. However, on these research areas we do not yet encounter high quality research. There are several reasons for this, among them lack of funds, limited access to basic data and statistics, and a very limited margin of academic freedom of expression. In addition, there is a gross misunderstanding of what constitutes sociological research and what it could do. Mostly, it is thought that sociologists can provide quick remedies and solutions to all social problems or issues. In the meantime, there is no systematic explanation and analysis of those social problems and phenomena. That is, it is thought that the task of sociology is to produce remedies and solutions and not to find out what is "wrong" with the society, for such effort might be considered some sort of political criticism of the status quo, and it is as such undesired.

If we take the family as a research problem, we do not have in Arabic yet a comprehensive study on the modern Arab family from a sociological perspective. We might have some very limited sample-surveys in one or another Arab country, but there are no general theoretical writings on the modern "Arab Family". Yet, this social institution has faced and still faces many changes that require such studies and writings. Actually when it is difficult to know for sure, except in some Arab states, the basic statistics on say, the rate of divorce, family size, fertility rate, family structure, etc., it is ironical that many of the promising studies on Arab family are published outside the Arab world, and not in Arabic! (20)

Let us take the problem of drug addiction, a problem that Arab governments are keen to eradicate and so they sponsor and support sociological research on this problem. We again, with very few exceptions, lack any authoritative study that could provide basic information of the extent and nature of the problem in Arab society. As for producing some theoretical models to explain why this problem exists, we find almost none. (21)

Perhaps this failure to provide exemplary studies is among the many reasons why sociological discourse did not succeed in having a visible presence in Arab intellectual circles. Also, it could be the nature of sociological research, which depends on data collection and explanation, rather than merely presenting personal philosophical reflections that has hindered its appeal to the Arab readership.

It is rare to find high quality sociological articles in Arabic. There are many reasons for this: many Arab sociologists, especially trained inside the Arab world, lack the skills needed for high quality papers. Also, funds and academic freedom to conduct research are often very limited. In addition, there is very limited interaction among sociologists to comment on and discuss each other's works. Most of them have to teach heavy loads of courses, which keep them busy.

Finally, many have to supplement their meagre income by extra teaching or textbook writing.

Sociology is generally limited to classroom teaching. Sociologists, so far, were not able to "invade" the cultural scene using their terms, concepts or theories. It is generally difficult to find in the Arab press or general Arabic books any visible influence of sociological concepts, such as class, nuclear family, race, status, etc. Also we do not encounter yet sociological debates in the press. For example, the Arab-Israeli conflict is rarely discussed using a social scientific perspective.

Sociologists have not succeeded yet in introducing some of the major sociological theses into the general Arab intellectual debates. For example, only very recent was Weber's: *The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism* translated into Arabic. The thesis is basically unknown in wider circles. Even books that have tried to discuss the Weberian thesis in Islam, such as Rodinson's and Turner's works, both translated into Arabic, are virtually undiscussed and perhaps even unknown! To illustrate, recently Toby Huff's "The Rise of Early Modern Science: Islam, China and the West." discussing Weber's thesis focussing on the rise of science, was translated into Arabic. The translation did not stimulate any debate or discussion of either Weber's or Huff's arguments. The same is true about other sociological or anthropological theses, though those same theses might be highly discussed and debated in the scientific literature.

The absence of sociological writings on such basic issues enhances the marginality of the field and suggests that though it has existed in some Arab universities for more than fifty years, there is a serious need for reassessments and evaluation.

Contributions of Arab Sociologists

Despite the state of Arab sociology as discussed above, we can classify Arab sociologists into three groups in terms of their contributions and interests:

Academic Sociologists

This group has tried to activate teaching sociology in Arab universities. They often focussed their attention on textbook writing. Some published ten dozens of such textbooks, such as Muhammed Al-Gohari from Egypt. However, most of these textbooks were based on American textbooks, mostly old ones, therefore these texts provided Arab students with some sociological material, but contributed a lot to making sociology obscure and alien. Most of these textbooks did not provide much on Arab society or culture. If they do present anything on the Arab world, it was usually in very limited matters. This enforced the notion that sociology is totally a western discipline that does not have anything to offer

to Arab society and culture. Students usually memorized those texts to pass exams and not to better understand society!

These textbooks also did not present translations of basic texts of the founding fathers, either full texts or selections. So it is rare to find translations of Weber, Simmel, Parsons, etc... This did not give Arab students the chance to be exposed to basic texts, and to know the founding fathers' writings directly. There are no new and advanced method books in Arabic, particularly for the use of quantitative research, which means lower standards of training among sociology students. (22).

Internal Sociologists

This group has tried to focus its studies on the Arab society and culture. Bennabi, though not a sociologist by training, tried to present a theoretical perspective to study the reasons of Arab backwardness. Wardi on the other hand tried to provide a theoretical analysis of the nature of the Arab world. He used the Iraqi society as his point of departure. He stressed the Bedouin nature of Arab culture, and how that nature is influencing contemporary Arab society. Sayyed Ouweis studied marginal subcultures among the poor of Egypt. He described how Arab society has dealt with problems of protest and discontent. All these "sociologists" succeeded to present some analysis and comments on the nature of the society and provided what could be called an "internal interpretation" of how society sees itself. The first two depended heavily on Ibn Khaldun. All of them used freely Western sociological concepts, but they were able to absorb them to enable them to understand their own societies better. Their writings, as I see them, constitute real Arab sociological writings.

External Sociologists

These are Arab sociologists who have studied Arab society and culture using Western theories and concepts. They are usually very critical in their studies, with not much sympathy of the traditional Arabic social fabric. Hisham Sharabi tried to look at Arab society as a patriarchal society that should be reconstructed to be able to relate to the modern age. Barkat's work uses Western theories and concepts on the Arab family, community and society in general. Both see Arab society from the outside and perhaps they do not mind reshaping it all anew, in accordance with what constitutes a modern society.

Both the internal and external sociologists, though they constitute the exceptions right now, do provide very important sociological writings on the Arab world.

Future of Sociological Writings

It seems to me, despite the present status of sociology, that the future of sociology in the Arab world will be bright. For most of the problems the Arab world is facing are social and cultural in nature. So then is an urgent need for better understanding and to be able to provide deeper and more sophisticated analyses. However, for sociology to succeed, to provide the badly needed efforts, some of the following considerations should be taken into account.

1. Sociology in the Arab world needs to redefine its priorities and needs. More attention should be given to research that will basically focus on Arab social and cultural issues. This will happen only through the establishment of better research centres, that are well funded and that provide a wide margin of academic freedom. Such centres can only be provided by governments that are convinced of the important role that the social sciences play in modern society. This will also provide sociologists with the legitimacy that their work should have.

2. Arab sociologists must create better communication networks among themselves and with international sociologists interested in the Arab world. Also, through such networks, professional associations become responsible for monitoring and improving standards of publications and research interests. Sociological societies that can cater to such needs are very much needed.

3. Arab sociologists should do their best to popularize, at least, some of their writings to win wider readership and should work hard to join the general cultural scenes.

4. Arab sociology should become more relevant and interested in common Arab current issues.

Acknowledgment: The author would like to thank the following: Deborah S. Akers, Abdullah Bakhawain, Abdullah Othman and Anour Waqqiallah for reading and commenting on an earlier draft of this paper.

Notes

(1) I have depended heavily on my experience, but did not neglect Arabic and English publications on sociology in the Arab world.

(2) See, Abubaker A. Bagader, "The Scholar: A socio-cultural being searching for an identity", *Bahithat*, 111, 1997, pp.201-211 (in Arabic)

(3) It has to be clear that sociology and anthropology for historically complex societies, as the Arab world, are used interchangeably in this essay.

(4) Many students of the Arab world today greatly depended on old Arab writings to study that society and culture. Also studies on the sifills, court records and documents, do provide very rich materials for social scientists.

(5) Sharabi thought that some basic changes in language usage should take place in Arabic culture today to facilitate the communication of current Arab ideas and issues, see H. Sharabi, *Cultural Criticism of Arab society at the end of the 20th century*, Beirut: Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1990. (in Arabic).

(6) Sociological studies do not yet constitute any general popular reading material for Arab readers. There are not many classical studies in modern Arabic.

(7) These are Mansur Fahmi, who wrote "La condition de la Femme dans la tradition et l'évolution de l'Islamisme", under Lucien Levy-Brhulle and Taha Hussein, "La philosophie sociale d'Ibn Khaldun, under Emile Durkheim, respectively.

(8) cf. A. Irabi, "Zum Stand der gegenwertigen Arabischen Soziologie", *Zeitschrift fur Soziologie*, 1980, 11, pp.167-182.

(9) This centre produced many empirical and theoretical studies on a wide spectrum of social issues, also publishes a leading journal in sociology.

(10) cf. A. Irabi, op.cit. and also this comment is repeated by almost all who have studied Arab sociology.

(11) We do not witness the influence of current trends in anthropology in these studies. They are limited to the functionalist approach.

(12) Most Marxists writings in Egypt were published for the general readership and not as textbooks. However, there were few textbooks, and dissertations that have adopted Marxist perspectives. The situation was totally different in other Arab states, e.g. Syria, Ex-South Yemen, Morocco, etc.

(13) Ali Wardi criticized such trends as not necessarily suitable for the study of the Iraqi society. See Ali Wardi, *Social Aspects of Iraqi Modern History*, London: Kufan publishing Limited, 1992, Vol. 5, pp. 292-338. (in Arabic).

(14) North African sociologists tend to reject what they have considered the colonial legacy. The Marxist approach is very popular. Perhaps the field studies of Paul Pascon, Lucette Valansi, Hernassi, Zghal, Khatibi, Taher Labib and Buhodiba are among the leading sociologists who presented "field studies".

(15) The Islamization of sociology is now backed even outside the universities. Cf. Bassam Tibi, "Islamization as a claim to dewesternization: Islamic fundamentalism and the challenge of cultural modernity", *Orientations*, Vol 1, 1992, pp. 167-178.

(16) I found out from interviewing many Arab sociologists that they do not try to follow-up what is being published outside Arabic-textbooks limits.

(17) Cf. Gazelle Review of literature on the Middle East, Review of Middle East Studies, and Bulletin of Middle East Studies Association. In the first two journals many Arab sociologists worked with Talal Asad.

(18) Both Wardi and Bennabi were well received and reviewed in Arabic. Actually some of Wardi's books created quiet a roaring response and several books were written to refute them!

(19) Cf. George Sabagh and Iman Ghazella "Arab Sociology Today: A view from Within", *Ann. Rev. Sociol.*, 1986, 12, pp.389-397.

(20) Recently many anthropological studies are published on the Arab family in English, such as Ziba Mir-Hosseini, *Marriage on Trial: A study of Islamic Family Law*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1993; Amira El Azhary Sombol, (ed.) *Women, The Family and Divorce Laws in Islamic History*, N.Y. : Syracuse University Press, 1996, etc..

(21) Cf. Mustapha Soueif et al. *Studies on Drugs Addiction*, Cairo, National Centre for Sociological and Crime Studies, 1990-1993. (in Arabic).

(22) Cf. Muhammed Al-Ghohari, "Sociology in Egypt and the Objectives of this Journal", *Annual Review of Sociology*, Cairo, 1998, 1, pp.7-16. (in Arabic).

CHAPTER 4 SOCIAL RESEARCH ABOUT PALESTINIANS IN ISRAEL: HISTORY, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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Preface

An inevitable state of uncertainty and bewilderment awaits the Palestinian researcher living in Israel every time he wants to expose, explain and analyse the experience of this part of the Palestinian people. This experience is so complicated that outsiders find it extremely hard to understand in all of its aspects. The state of uncertainty appears when the researcher asks himself what details can best convey this experience in all of its complications and contradictions in such a straightforward manner as to make it comprehensible to the reader or listener. For there are too many details about a socio-political reality so complicated and contradictory that ignoring or abridging any part of it may cause a total or, at best, partial miscomprehension. So, a reader wanting to expose the experience will always wonder: will the outsiders understand what he tries to convey? Along with this enquiry he lives moments of tension for fear that outsiders might not grasp what he wants to say, and at certain moments he is overwhelmed by the feeling that nobody especially his Arab and Palestinian brothers, can understand what he really means, to the point that he may decide that giving up the attempt is better for everyone.

Experience has taught me that the task of exposing the situation of the Palestinians in Israel becomes even more difficult when we look at it from the angle of the situation of other Arab peoples.

The Arab brothers had fostered well-established visions of this situation which are sometimes not based on good knowledge of it. No wonder that changing well-established visions is extremely difficult and sometimes impossible, adding new difficulty to the job of conveying the experience.

When we come to the question under consideration, the task of conveying the experience may become far more difficult because we are considering a unique situation : first, because it concerns the experience of a limited number of specialized social researchers and not the experience of everyone in society; secondly, it is a new experience that had taken shape inside the Israeli academic institutions and flourished on their tradition; and, thirdly, it is an experience which is independent of the Arab experience and has little in common with it.

Therefore, it becomes clear that the Palestinian researcher in Israel is, in terms of his background and experience, a product of the Israeli academic