

MESA Annual Meetings (2009–2016)

Intellectual Networks and Nodes

Maxim Romanov

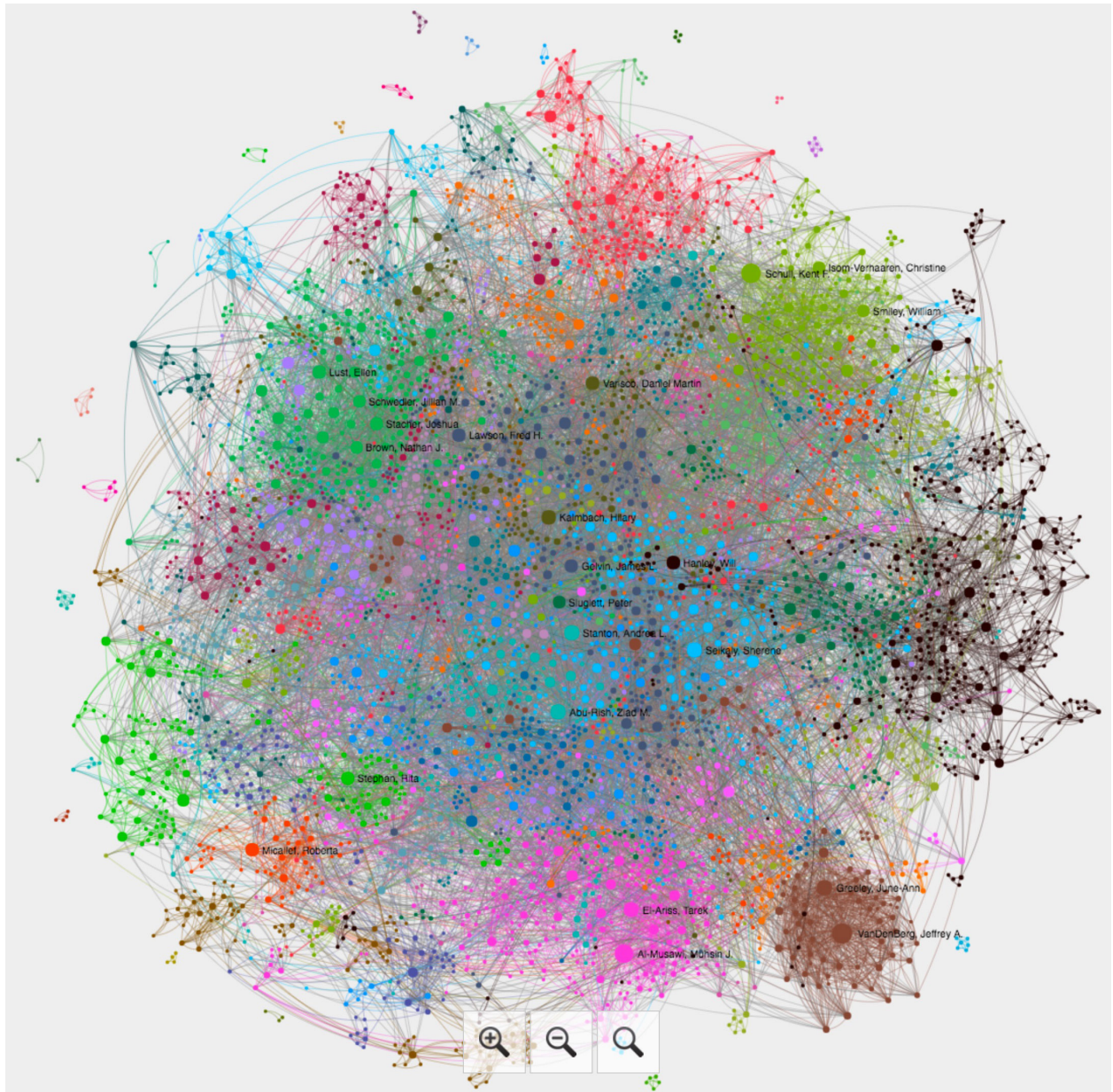
The Middle East Studies Association (MESA) is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Although it is not as large as such associations as AAR and AHA, it is very dear to most of us who are engaged in the study of Middle East. The anniversary seems like a good reason to reflect on the state of the field and communities of scholars that MESA brought together over these years. Those who attended the annual meeting in Boston just a couple of weeks ago must have seen an attempt to visualize academic genealogies of scholars of Middle East, which sounds like a very interesting idea, but will take forever to realize. At the moment the genealogy looks like a lot of snowflakes (here is Franz Rosenthal's snowflake of students),¹ but we all realize that the real life is way more complicated and more interesting than that (**<hint>MESA should add another field to academic profiles, where we'll need to provide the name of our adviser(s?!)-or, better, the entire dissertation committee</hint>**—then we will be able to recreate a living genealogy of the field with all its complexities and subtleties).

While the genealogy project is too far away from its maturity, we do have some other interesting data through which we can get a glimpse into the academic community that grew around MESA: we can use programs of annual meetings—in combination with academic profiles of MESA members (and, later abstracts of their papers)—to gauge whether and how we are connected with each other across the field, how we form collegial communities and maintain them, and how these communities take new shapes in reaction to internal developments in the academy and to external political and social factors. The program data is limited in many ways, as it does not capture such connections as who attends what panels, who criticizes/supports whom, nor does it now come close to revealing who we hang out with instead of between panels at the most attended and beloved area of the conference. Additionally, only a limited number of programs is relatively accessible at the moment and our insight can go back in time only 7 years (2009–2016; all data used below is openly available at the official MESA Website).

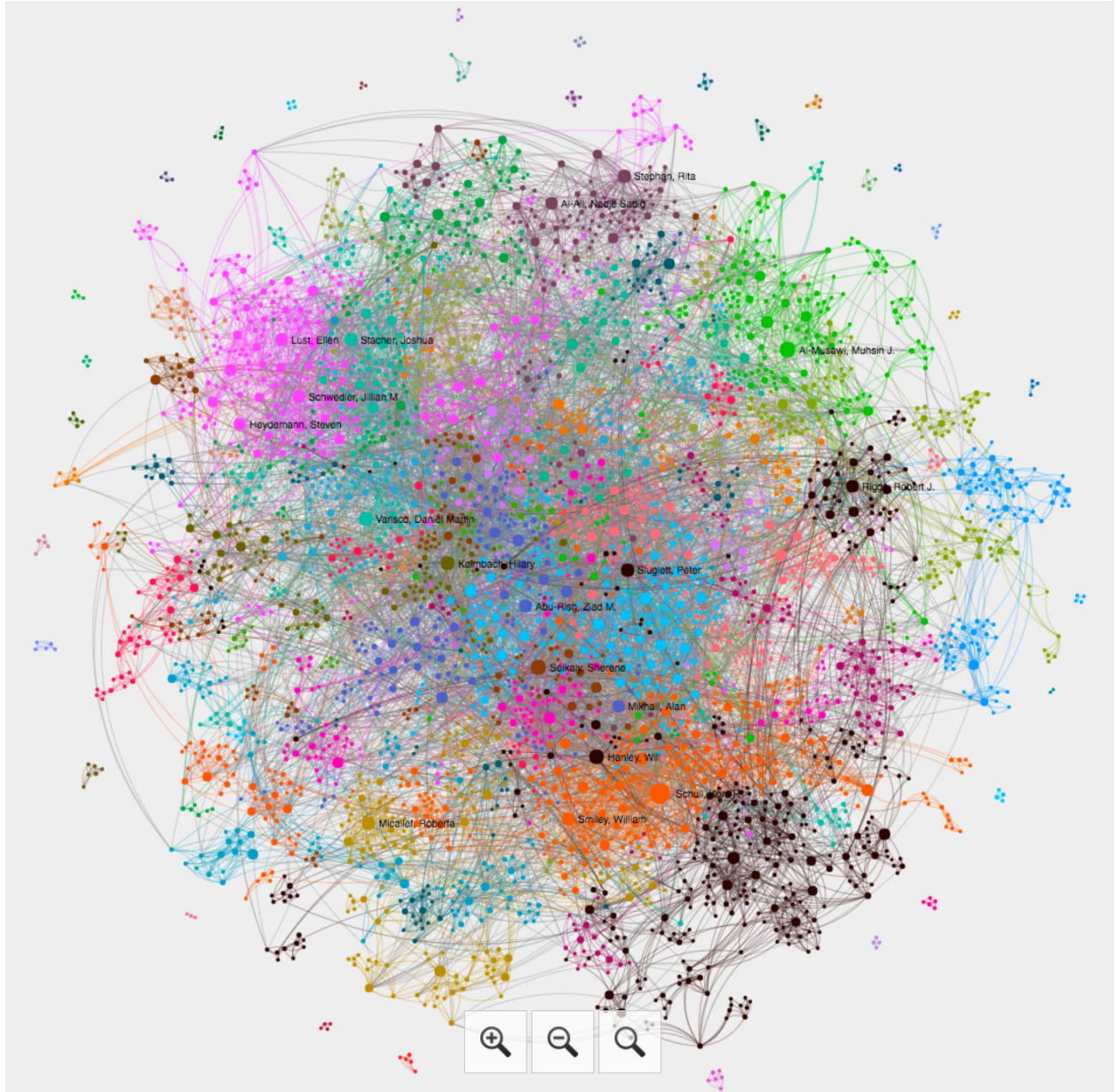
Members

There are 4,833 members on the MESA website at the moment; 1,135 members have not participated in an organized panel, round table or a thematic conversation.

¹Photo by Robin Dougherty, source: www.facebook.com.



Since it is common at MESA to put papers into adhoc/assembled sessions, we occasionally find ourselves in an unfamiliar company. For this reason it makes sense to exclude



Top 25 communities are 41, 11, 55, 58, 42, 5, 38, 19, 35, 17, 24, 16, 15, 39, 21, 28, 57, 30, 29, 3, 26, 36, 18, 9, 6.

On data, method and techniques

The data has been collected from the official MESA website—only what is openly accessible has been included into the dataset (in other words, if you chose not to make your profile public, your data is not in the dataset). The data has been downloaded with `wget`, reformatted with a series of scripts written in `python`. The data was then reformatted into two network models: 1) where scholars are connected through all the panels and sessions they participated in; 2) where scholars are connected only through panels and sessions that were pre-organized; in other words, assembled panels—i.e. those in which we end up when we submit a single paper—were excluded from the second model so that the dataset includes only connections that scholars themselves choose. In both cases, scholars with multiple roles (such as an Organizer and a Presenter)

were given more **weight**, to stress their active engagement. The network analysis is performed in Gephi, and the results were saved into an interactive network using Sigma.js plugin. Detailed reports were then algorithmically generated for all major *intellectual communities* (with the size of at least 1%) using R, R Markdown, and the knitr package (**NB:** A special thank you to Thomas Köntges for repeating time and again that I should be using knitr!). The raw blogpost with R code can be found on my github. Some data cleaning—mainly to unify different spellings—was done with OpenRefine.

What's in the reports?

Reports summarize aggregated formal descriptions that the members of MESA provide in their academic profiles: disciplines, subfields, geographical areas of specialization, working languages, and degrees.

List of community reports

- #1: Modern Politics
- #2: Ottoman History
- #3: ???
- #4: ???
- #5: ???
- #6: ???
- #7: ???
- #8: ???
- #9: ???
- #10: ???
- #11: ???
- #12: ???
- #13: ???
- #14: ???
- #15: ???
- #16: ???
- #17: ???
- #18: ???
- #19: ???
- #20: ???
- #21: ???
- #22: ???
- #23: ???
- #24: ???
- #25: ???
- #26: ???
- #27: ???
- #28: ???

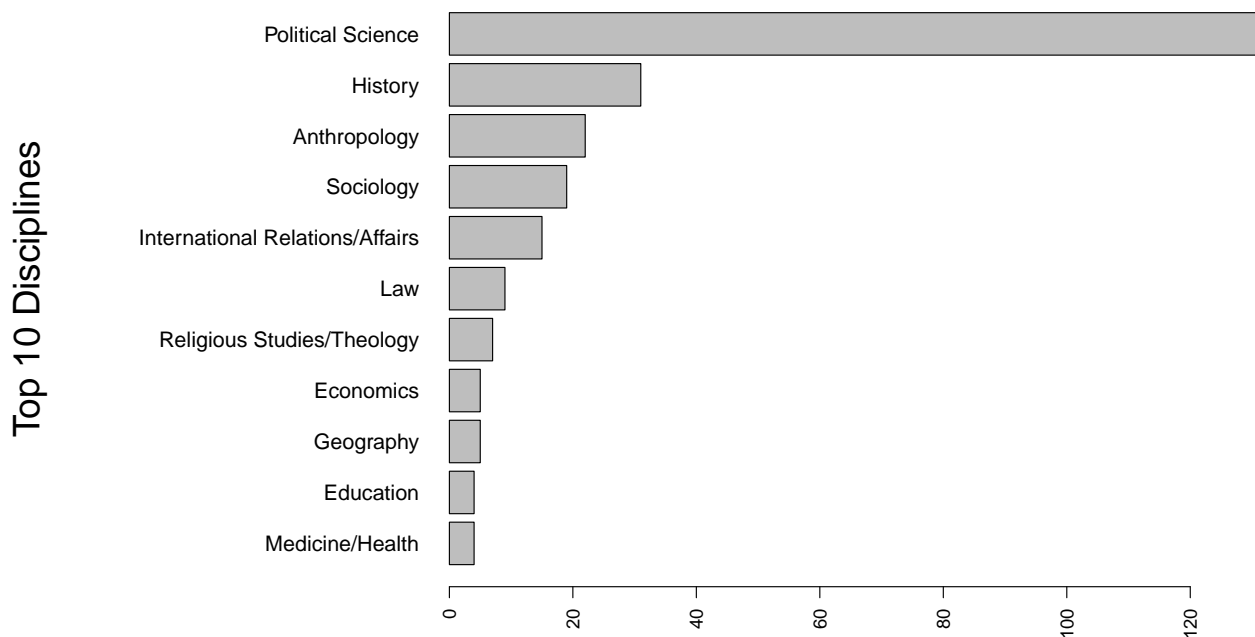
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TEMPLATE

Community #1 (*Modularity: 41*)

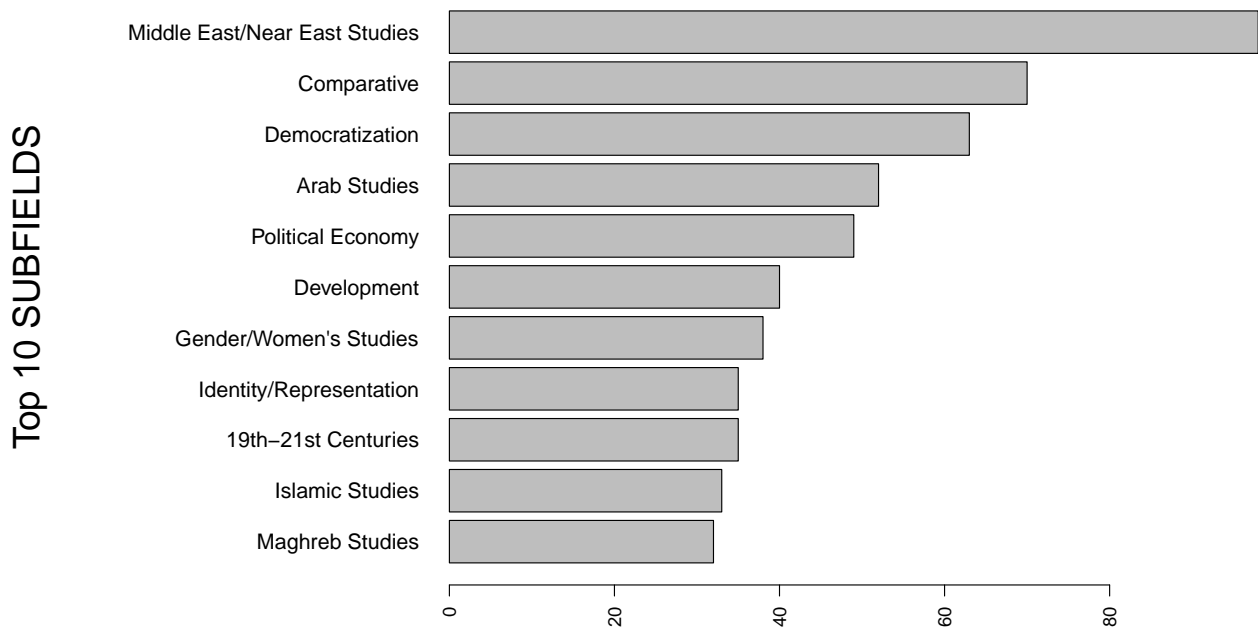
The community has **316 members (6.538%)**. The top features of the community are as follows: **Disciplines:** Political Science (131), History (31), Anthropology (22), Sociology (19), International Relations/Affairs (15); **Subfields:** Middle East/Near East Studies (98), Comparative (70), Democratization (63), Arab Studies (52), Political Economy (49); **Geographical focus:** All Middle East (94), Egypt (68), Arab States (48), Maghreb (38), Turkey (38); **Languages of expertise:** Arabic (184), French (148), English (111), German (62), Spanish (44); **Members have degrees from:** Harvard U (21), New York U (14), Princeton U (11), U Chicago (10), U Michigan (10); **Most active members are:** Lust, Ellen (79), Schwedler, Jillian M. (78), Stacher, Joshua (76), Heydemann, Steven (74), Cammett, Melani C. (68).

1. Disciplines



Detailed list of disciplines: Political Science (131), History (31), Anthropology (22), Sociology (19), International Relations/Affairs (15), Law (9), Religious Studies/Theology (7), Geography (5), Economics (5), Medicine/Health (4), Education (4), Architecture & Urban Planning (2)

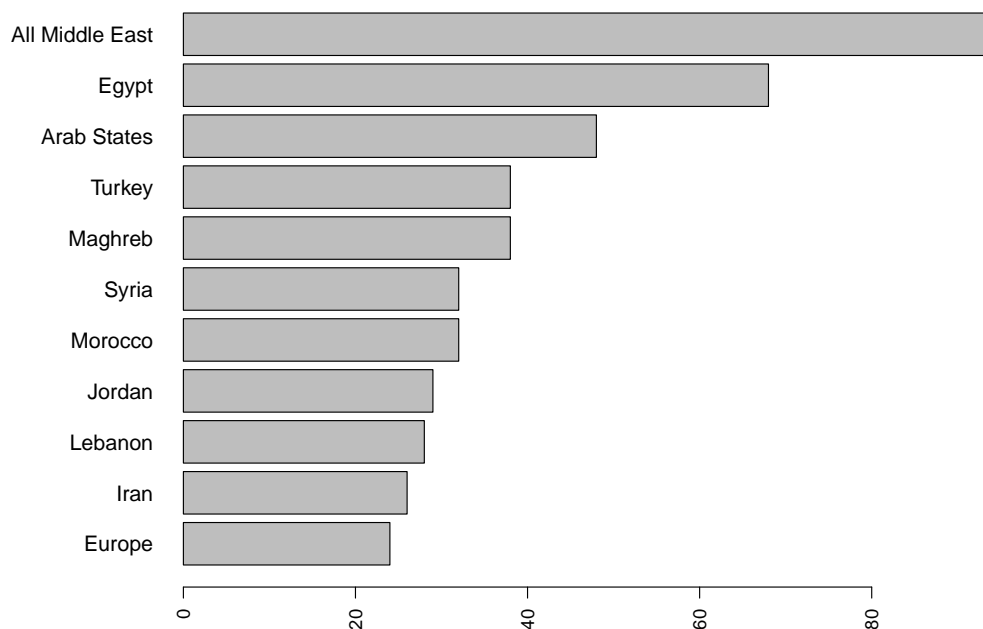
2. Subfields



Detailed list of subdisciplines: Middle East/Near East Studies (98), Comparative (70), Democratization (63), Arab Studies (52), Political Economy (49), Development (40), Gender/Women's Studies (38), 19th-21st Centuries (35), Identity/Representation (35), Islamic Studies (33), Maghreb Studies (32), Nationalism (29), State Formation (27), Conflict Resolution (26), Arab-Israeli Conflict (26), Colonialism (24), Foreign Relations (23), Turkish Studies (22), Islamic Law (20), Urban Studies (20), Security Studies (20), Globalization (19), Transnationalism (19), Iranian Studies (18), Diaspora/Refugee Studies (18), Theory (18), Public Policy (18), Human Rights (15), Ethnography (15), Gulf Studies (14), Ottoman Studies (13), Mediterranean Studies (12), Modernization (12), Islamic Thought (11), Current Events (11), Kurdish Studies (11), Education (10), Arabic (10), Cultural Studies (10), Peace Studies (9), Historiography (9), Ethnic Groups (8), Minorities (8), Pop Culture (7), World History (7), Armenian Studies (7), History of Religion (7), Modern (7), Terrorism (6), African Studies (6), Trade/Investment (5), Israel Studies (5), Health (5), Environment (5), Pedagogy (4), Mysticism/Sufi Studies (3), History of Science (3), Ethnomusicology (3), 13th-18th Centuries (3), Music (3), Population Studies (3), Andalusí Studies (2), Energy Studies (2), Cinema/Film (2), 7th-13th Centuries (2), Media (2), All Time Periods (2), South Asian Studies (2), Christian Studies (2)

3. Geographical focus

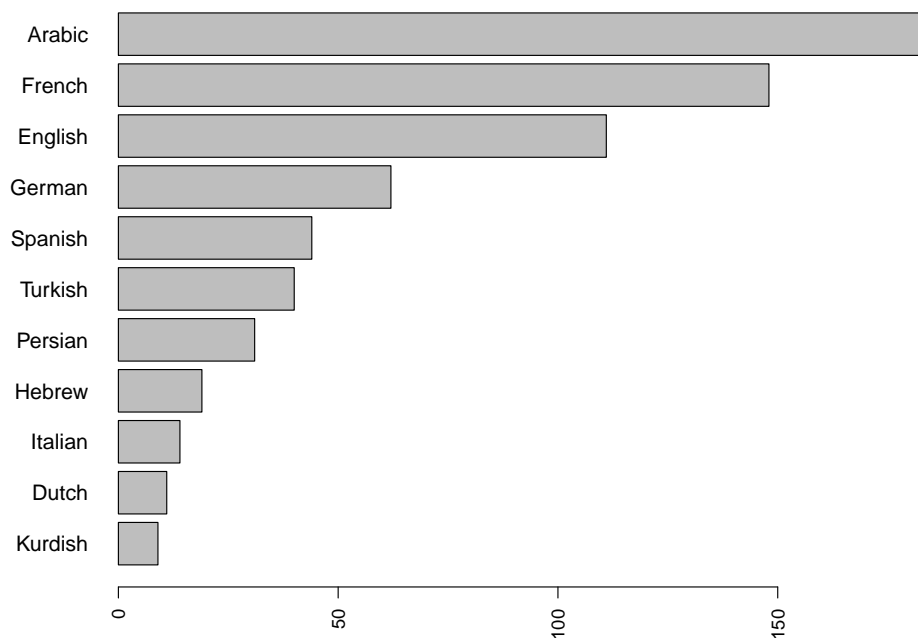
Top 10 GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS



Detailed list of geographical regions: All Middle East (94), Egypt (68), Arab States (48), Maghreb (38), Turkey (38), Morocco (32), Syria (32), Jordan (29), Lebanon (28), Iran (26), Europe (24), Palestine (20), Gulf (20), Islamic World (20), Tunisia (19), Mediterranean Countries (14), Ottoman Empire (13), Fertile Crescent (13), Arabian Peninsula (12), Israel (12), Iraq (11), Algeria (11), Mashreq (10), Africa (Sub-Saharan) (10), Yemen (9), Kuwait (8), The Levant (7), Armenia (5), Kurdistan (5), Gaza (4), Central Asia (4), India (3), North America (3), Saudi Arabia (3), West Bank (3), Oman (3), UAE (3), Anatolia (3), Pakistan (3), Spain (2), Balkans (2), Mauritania (2), Caucasus (2), former Soviet Union (2), Qatar (2), Sudan (2), Libya (2)

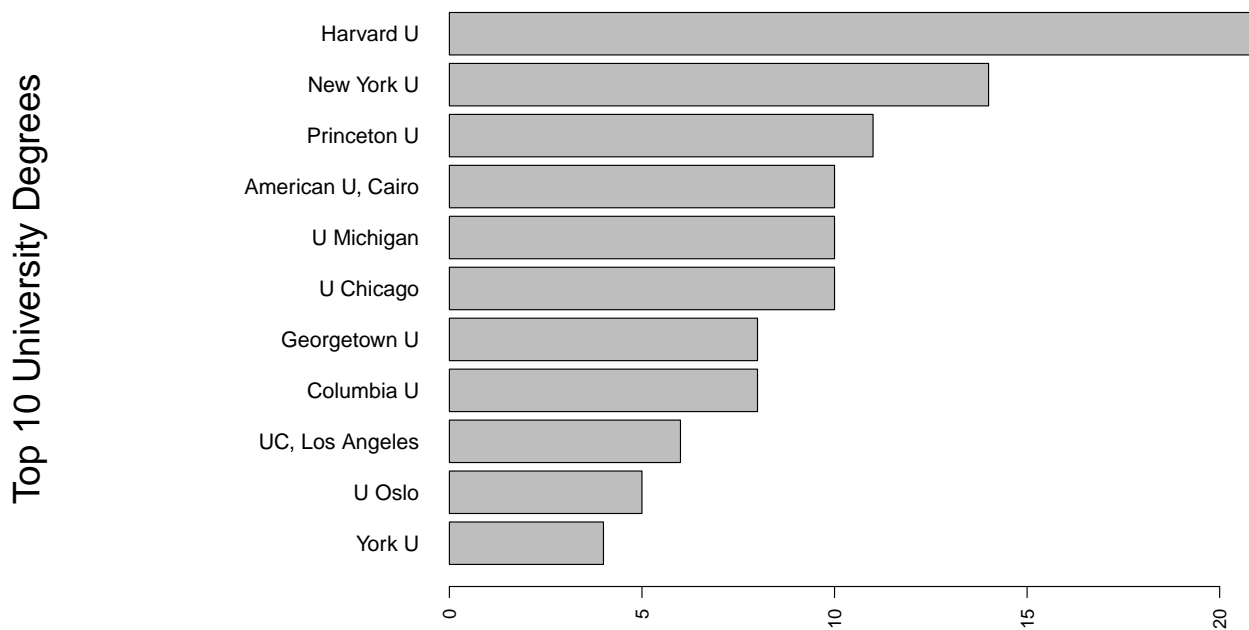
4. Languages of expertise

Top 10 LANGUAGES



Detailed list of languages: Arabic (184), French (148), English (111), German (62), Spanish (44), Turkish (40), Persian (31), Hebrew (19), Italian (14), Dutch (11), Kurdish (9), Norwegian (8), Russian (7), Armenian (6), Azeri (4), Ottoman (4), Greek (4), Urdu (4), Kurmanji (3), Japanese (2), Tajik (2), Swedish (2), Bosnian (2), Latin (2)

5. Degree granting institutions



Detailed list of degree granting institutions: Harvard U (21), New York U (14), Princeton U (11), U Chicago (10), U Michigan (10), American U, Cairo (10), Columbia U (8), Georgetown U (8), UC, Los Angeles (6), U Oslo (5), UC, Berkeley (4), Stanford U (4), Boston U (4), Boğaziçi U (4), Yale U (4), U Oxford (4), U Virginia (4), McGill U (4), York U (4), U Toronto (3), UT, Austin (3), U Florida (3), AUB (3), U Arizona (3), Cornell U (3), IEP d'Aix-en-Provence (3), Birzeit U (3), U Cambridge (3), U Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (3), George Washington U (3), Ghent U (3), Ankara U (2), U Houston (2), UC, Santa Cruz (2), FU, Berlin (2), Emory U (2), Tufts U (2), U Copenhagen (2), U Pennsylvania (2), Tel-Aviv U (2), Duke U (2), U Utah (2), U Paris (2), Brown U (2), Ohio State U (2), SUNY, Binghamton (2), U St Andrews (2), U Southern California (2), Tübingen U (2), SUNY Stony Brook (2), King's College London (2), SOAS (2), American U, Beirut (2), Florida State U (2), U Leeds (2), U Arkansas (2), Johns Hopkins U (2), Sciences Po Paris (2), U Tokyo (2), American U (2), U Kansas (2), NYU (2), Cairo U (2)

6. Most active members of the community

Lust, Ellen (79), Schwedler, Jillian M. (78), Stacher, Joshua (76), Heydemann, Steven (74), Cammett, Melani C. (68), Albrecht, Holger (63), Brownlee, Jason (63), Anderson, Lisa (61), Brown, Nathan J. (58), Carapico, Sheila (56), Al-Hamarneh, Ala (56), Bogaert, Koenraad (54), Kanna, Ahmed (54), Entelis, John P. (53), Lynch, Marc (51), Clark, Janine A. (50), Schayegh, Cyrus (49), Zemni, Sami (48), Yom, Sean (48), Sallam, Hesham (44), Herb, Michael (44), Bishara, Dina (43), Parker, Christopher H. (42), Moghadam, Val (40), Tajali, Mona (40), Kurzman, Charles (40), Brooke, Steven T. (38), Beinlin, Joel (38), Bellin, Eva (38), Jacob, Wilson Chacko (36), Salime, Zakia (36), Benstead, Lindsay J. (35), Pearlman, Wendy (34), Bayat, Asef (34), Chalcraft, John T. (34), Tezcur, Gunes Murat (32), Gasper, Michael (32), Gause III, F. Gregory (32), Nugent, Elizabeth R. (30), Volpi, Frederic (30), Gao, Eleanor (29), Schulhofer-Wohl, Jonah (28), Wedeen, Lisa (28), Bouziane, Malika (27), Reif, Megan E. (26), Vodopyanov, Anya (26), Mazur, Kevin (25), Buehler, Matt (25), Moore, Pete W. (25), Engelcke, Dörthe (25), Utvik, Bjorn Olav (25), Parkinson, Sarah (24), Marsans-Sakly, Silvia (23), Bank, Andre (23), Sorbera, Lucia (23), Gervasio, Gennaro (23), Doughan, Yazan

(22), Hoffmann, Anja (22), Zerhouni, Saloua (22), Valbjorn, Morten (22), Scharfenort, Nadine (21), Sika, Nadine (21), Marshall, Shana (21), Holmes, Amy Austin (21), Correa, Dale J. (21), Mojaddedi, Jawid (20), Deputy, Emma (20), Maghraoui, Driss (20), Trager, Eric (20), Harders, Cilja Maren (20), Angrist, Michele Penner (19), Karakoc, Ekrem (19), Zvan Elliott, Katja (18), Geukjian, Ohannes (18), Sayej, Caroleen (18), Brand, Laurie (18), Sternfeld, Rachel A. (17), Daadaoui, Mohamed (17), Selvik, Kjetil (16), Goldberg, Ellis (16), Schlumberger, Oliver (16), Sunik, Anna (16), Joya, Angela (16), Richter, Thomas (16), Semerdjian, Elyse (16), Ketchley, Neil (15), El Kurd, Dana (15), Meyer, Gunter (15), De Smet, Brecht (15), El Naggare, Amani (15), Jabary Salamanca, Omar (15), Vairel, Frederic (15), Lenner, Katharina (14), Mednicoff, David (14), Shalaby, Marwa (14), Welborne, Bozena (14), Ciftci, Sabri (14), Bush, Sarah (14), Tol, Gonul (14), Faris, David (14), de Regt, Marina (14), Rivetti, Paola (14), Turkyilmaz, Yektan (14), Bergh, Sylvia (13), Abdalla, Nadine (13), Holden, Stacy E. (13), Belakhdar, Naoual (13), Cantini, Daniele (13), Shehata, Samer S. (13), Wuthrich, F. Michael (13), Brumberg, Daniel (13), Casey, James (13), Ayeb, Habib (13), Shahibzadeh, Yadullah (12), Moustafa, Laila (12), Gershovich, Moshe (12), Bamyeh, Mohammed A. (12), Hartshorn, Ian (12), Abouzzohour, Yasmina (12), Brynen, Rex J. (12), Levi-sanchez, Suzanne (12), Salloukh, Bassel (12), Ben Shitrit, Lihi (12), Yassin, Nasser (12), Ghadbian, Najib (12), Roy, Sara M. (11), Jaraba, Mahmoud (11), Koehler, Kevin (11), Ajl, Max (11), Hayward, Emma (11), Baroudi, Sami Emile (11), Maktabi, Rania (11), Shami, Seteney (11), Quadri, Junaid (11), Maghraoui, Abdeslam (11), Dalmasso, Emanuela (11), Mohseni, Payam (11), Guiler, Kimberly (11), Mobasher, Mohsen (11), Weirich, Sarah (10), Boulby, Marion (10), De Jong, Anne (10), Bardawil, Fadi (10), Shehata, Dina (10), Weipert-Fenner, Irene (10), Kurze, Arnaud (10), Davis-Packard, Kent (10), Mansour, Dina (10), Kardas, Saban (10), Henneberg, Sabina (10), Alexander, Isabella (10), Prakash, Archana (10), Frangie, Samer (10), Gunn, T. Jeremy (10), Reinhart, A. Kevin (10), Farahat, Omar (10), Salehi-Isfahani, Djavad (10), Abdelrahman, Maha (10), Rutherford, Bruce (10), McGuire, James (9), Peters, Anne M. (9), El Sayed, Somaia (9), Torelli, Stefano Maria (9), Salem, Sara (9), Thyen, Kressen (9), Malak, Karim (9), Urgola, Stephen (9), Masud, Muhammad (9), Celik, Ayse Betul (8), Fakhoury, Tamirace (8), Khosrokhavar, Farhad (8), Phaneuf, Victoria (8), Frierson, Elizabeth B. (8), Wiltse, David (8), Abu Moghli, Mai (8), Wasef, Mirna (8), Goodwin, Jeff (8), Jasper, James (8), Yildirim, Tefvik Murat (8), Yildirim, Abdulkadir (8), Baumgarten, Helga (8), Sewilam, Heba (7), Johnston, Trevor (7), Zahar, Marie-Joelle (7), Mahdi, Ali Akbar (7), Rizkallah, Amanda (7), Vermaelen, Annemie (7), Ababneh, Sara (7), Pancoast, Mary (7), Sheldon, Zachary (7), Sinno, Barea (7), Zeghal, Malika C. (7), Collombier, Virginie (7), Williams, Paul (7), Athamneh, Waed (7), Behi, Kambiz (7), Segalla, Spencer (7), Moaddel, Mansoor (7), Debruyne, Pascal (7), Darwich, May (7), Mashayekhi, Mehrdad (7), Hoffman, Michael (7), Boroujerdi, Mehrzad (7), Carroll, Katherine Blue (7), Gulalp, Haldun (7), Mahmoud, Ashraf (7), Hintz, Lisel (7), Farouk, Yasmine (7), Habeeb, William Mark (6), Azad, Hasan (6), Khawaja, Marwan (6), Leung, Cheryl (6), Grewal, Sharan (6), Hoodfar, Homa (6), Ustun, Kadir (6), Kosebalaban, Hasan (6), Martin, Alexander (6), Pargeter, Alison (6), Young, Elizabeth (6), Harb, Mona (6), Mitchell, Penelope (6), Karaman, Emine Rezzan (6), Diwan, Ishac (6), Salomon, Noah (6), Petermann, Sandra (6), Viscomi, Joseph (6), Tripp, Aili Mari (6), Payaslian, Simon (6), Bou Nassif, Hicham (6), Matthies-Boon, Vivienne (6), Cortes, Erika Alejandra (6), Lounnas, Djallil (6), Mouddeh, Abdelhay (6), Laveille, Yasmine (6), Petkanas, Zoe (6), Giacaman, Rita (6), Grigoriadis, Ioannis N. (6), Sipahi, Ali (6), Sezgin, Yüksel (6), Krafft, Caroline (6), Tracy Samuel, Annie (6), Hannoum, Abdelmajid (6), Hadji, Fatima (6), Yuksel, Metin (6), Rubin, Gabriel (6), Watt, Graham (6), Schnitzer, Jay (6), Maranlou, Sahar (6), Malmvig, Helle (6), Aburaya, Issam (6), Nordenson, Jon (6), Idrissi, Amal (6), El Sherif, Ashraf (6), Koehler-Derrick, Gabriel (6), Redman, James (6), El Shakry, Hoda (6), Tal, David (6), Alexander, Elise (6), Ohl, Dorothy (6), Lamont, Chris (6), Khan, Sohaib (6), Piersma, Linda (6), Vatthauer, Jan-Philipp (6), Assaad, Ragui (6), Tyssen, Tora Systad (6), Ekmanian, Harout (6), Nir, Omri (6), Springborg, Robert (6), Duboc, Marie (6), Mataria, Awad (6), Reiff, Cindy (6), Qadery, Mustapha (6), Hosoya, Sachiko (6), Fogliata, Stefano (5), Jawad, Nazek (5), Shuayb, Maha (5), Berriane, Yasmine (5), Doherty, Gareth (5), Tho Seeth, Amanda (5), Sallam, Mohamed (5), Cardinal, Monique C. (5), Aykut, Ebru (5), Gurses, Mehmet (5), Tugal, Cihan Z. (5), Kelly, Marjorie (5), Tank, Pinar (5), Muteir, Marwan (5), Allarakia, Luai (5), AlSoos, Imad (5), Hussein, Yamila (5), Sonneveld, Nadia (5), Taha, Maisa (5), Goldstein, Ian (5), Keli, Haje (5), Mady, Abdelfattah (5), Majed, Rima (5), Kahn, Michelle (5), Gunes, Cengiz (5), Ramos, Stephen (5), Sadiqi, Fatima (5), Romano, David (5), Adak, Ufuk (5), Hofheinz, Albrecht (5), Tas, Latif (5), Ofeish, Sami A. (5), Eder, Mine S. (5), Awad, Hani (5), Nashif, Nadim (5), Bolton, Caitlyn (4), Ayata, Bilgin (4), Rabo, Annika (4), Al-Sheikh Hasan, Abdullah (4), Wahba, Dina (4), Kazzuha, Walid (4), Tabatabai, Ariane (4), Shannon, Jonathan H. (4)

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List of community reports

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