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A NOTE ON PUBLISHING STATISTICS
IN NORTH AFRICA

Michael W. Albin

Among the challenges librarians face in collecting publications from North Africa is the measurement of the volume of book publishing in the region. UNESCO statistics are justly characterized as being late and incomplete. The *Accessions List : Middle East* cites titles of books and periodicals acquired by the Library of Congress Office in Cairo, but does not provide a consistent measure of publication output. Adding to the difficulty is that national bibliographies are not comprehensive in coverage of national book production. Nonetheless, these same bibliographies, incomplete as they may be, offer statistical insights into the composition of the local book industries. The recent reappearance of the Moroccan national bibliography, the *Dépôt Légal*, provides an occasion to begin a regular statistical measure in the Maghreb. What follows is a modest step toward statistical analysis of book production. Ideally, the effort should be continued each year as the new issues of the national bibliographies appear. The categories of measurement should also be more tightly defined and subject classification added.

The potential benefits of these statistics are clear. Apart from their use by librarians in the measurement of acquisitions efforts, they may also be used to calculate the impact of Arabization, measure changes in the subject interest and observe the overall vitality of the publishing industry. In some future, expanded form, statistics will also be of use to scholars across many disciplines.

Table 1, « Book Publishing in Tunisia by Type of Publisher, » is based on the 1982 *Bibliographie Nationale de Tunisie*. In tabulating the entries I have considered as commercial publications the output of Société tunisienne de diffusion and the Maison tunisienne d'édition. There is one important caution in using this table : the BNT incorporates unpublished university dissertations, works which are not really publications at all.

Table 1
Book Publishing by Type of Publisher

	<i>Arabic</i>	<i>French</i>
Commercial publications	99	16
University publications	18	7
Arab league & associated bodies	7	3
Government publications	10	11
Textbooks (all levels).	37	73
Children's publications	23	2
Political groups, unions, etc.	4	1
Unpublished theses	26	130
Publications of indeterminate provenance	6	2

Table 2 is based on the national bibliography of Morocco, the *Dépôt Légal* for 1980 and follows many of the same categories as table 1 for Tunisia. This source too includes a large number of unpublished theses.

Table 2
Book Publishing by Type of Publisher

	<i>Arabic</i>	<i>French</i>
Commercial publications	88	26
University publications	3	3
Government publications (including secondary school texts by education ministry)	30	44
Political party publications	32	9
Textbooks (university)	53	9
Unpublished theses	8	103
Publications of indeterminate	35	8

Table 3 is also based in the *Dépôt Légal* for 1980. Here, however, I have concentrated on the provenance of commercial publications. Commercial publishing in Morocco differs from that of Tunisia in its geographical dispersal around the country.

Table 3

Commercial Books by Place of Publication

	<i>Arabic</i>	<i>French</i>
Casablanca	41	13
Rabat	29	8
Fez	12	0
Tetouan	4	0
Wajda	1	0
Tangier	1	5
TOTAL	88	26

Tables 4 and 5 are derived from the *Bibliographie de l'Algerie*, nos. 40 and 41 (1983). Table 4 divides monographic publishing output by place of publication, while Table 5 provides a breakdown by type of publisher. As was the case above, unpublished dissertations are also counted.

Table 4

Algerian Books by Place of Publication

	<i>French</i>	<i>Arabic</i>
Algiers	257	146
Oran	59	5
Constantine	7	9
Ghardaia	0	2
Provenance unclear	2	2
TOTAL	325	164

Table 5
Type of Publisher

	<i>French</i>	<i>Arabic</i>
University and Society	99	5
Government	46	20
Societe Nat'l d'Edition et de Diffusion (Entre. Nat'l du livre)	45	74
Textbook	59	40
Dissertation	63	8
Regional or International Organization	0	1
Other	9	14
Unclear	4	2
TOTAL	325	164

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